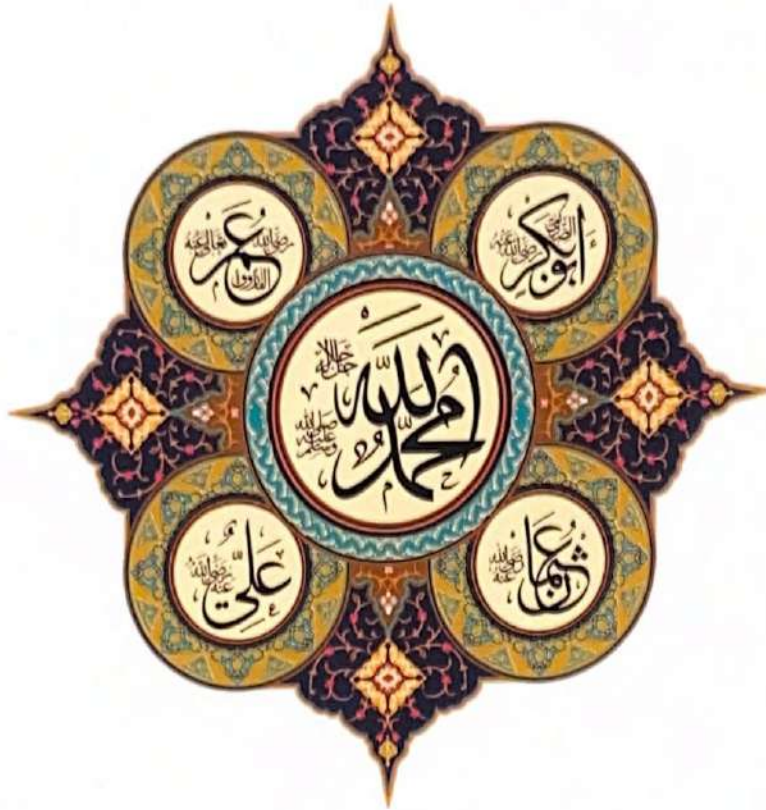


THE SUBLIME STATUS OF
**SAYYIDUNĀ ABŪ BAKR AND
SAYYIDUNĀ 'UMAR**



AN ABRIDGMENT OF
**MAṬLA' AL-QAMARAYN
FĪ IBĀNAT SABQAT AL-'UMARAYN**

IMĀM AḤMAD RIḌĀ KHĀN AL-QĀDIRĪ



AN AL IHYA FOUNDATION PUBLICATION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**The Sublime Status
of
Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and
Sayyidunā ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما**

An abridgment of:

**Maṭla‘ al-Qamarayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-
‘Umarayn**

Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān al-Qādirī رحمته الله

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عن خالد بن معدان عن معاذ بن جبل قال :
قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم :

«إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْفِتْنُ وَسَبَّ أَصْحَابِي فَلْيُظْهِرِ الْعَالِمُ
عَلَيْهِ قِتْنٌ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ لَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ صَرْفًا وَلَا عَدْلًا»

On the authority of Sayyidunā Mu'adh ibn
Jabal ؓ who reports that the Messenger of
Allāh ﷺ said:

"When dissensions become manifest and
my Companions are reviled, then let every
knower express his knowledge; as
whosoever does not, upon him is the curse
of Allāh and His Angels and the entirety of
mankind; Allāh shall accept none of his
obligatory nor voluntary acts of worship."

[al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī, Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn 'Alī,
al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Samī']

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Transliteration Key

ا	Alif	A		ط	Tā'	T
ب	Bā'	B		ظ	Zā'	Ẓ
ت	Tā'	T		ع	'Ayn	'
ث	Thā'	TH		غ	Ghayn	GH
ج	Jim'	J		ف	Fā'	F
ح	Ḥā'	H		ق	Qāf	Q
خ	Khā'	KH		ك	Kāf	K
د	Dāl	D		ل	Lām	L
ذ	Dhāl	DH		م	Mīm	M
ر	Rā'	R		ن	Nūn	N
ز	Zāy	Z		و	Hā'	H
س	Sīn	S		و	Wāw	W
ش	Shīn	SH		ي	Yā'	Y
ص	Ṣād	Ṣ		ء	Hamzah	'
ض	Ḍād	Ḍ				

The first column shows the letters as written in Arabic; the second denotes the letter names and the third column is the transliteration.

أ	أ	ب	ب	ب	ب
bū	bī	bā	bu	bi	ba
ي	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب
lā	Bbu	Bbi	bba	bb	B

Foreword

The great Imām and Mujaddid (Reviver of the Religion), Shaykh Ahmad Ridā Khān ؒ, wrote *Muntahā al-Taṣīl li Mabḥath al-Taḥṭīl*, a masterpiece making abundantly clear from verses of the Holy Qur'ān, the Aḥādīth and the statements of the scholars, the pre-eminent stations of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ among the Companions ؓ. This work spans 90 juz²; however, fearing its length would be arduous on readers, the erudite Imām penned an abridgement entitled, *Matla' al-Qamarayn fī Ibānat Sabqat al-'Umarayn*³.

¹ منتهى التصيل لبحث التصيل (The Apex of Detail in the Study of Superiority)

² If we assume a juz' to be 16 pages in length, then this masterpiece would comprise of at least 1400 pages, which after editing and paragraphing, would extend to a minimum 3,000 pages.

³ مطلع المزمين في إنبات السبقين (The Rising of the Two Moons in the Exposition of the Precedence of the Two Masters)

It is the *qā'idah* in Arabic idiom that when two things together are mentioned, the easiest on the tongue is doubled. For example, dates and water could be *al-mā'ān*, but this is not easy on the tongue – hence, *al-aswadān*. Similarly, 'Umarayn is easier than Abū-Bakrayn, even though Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ is *afḍal*. Hence, the term *al-'Umarayn* ؓ. So also *al-Qamarayn* for the sun and the moon; and this is well-known.

It is believed that Imām Ahmad Ridā Khān ؒ was not referring to this idiom in this particular title. This is because, they (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ) are both moons and the shining sun that illuminates them is the Messenger of Allāh ؐ.

Al-Qamarayn is a reference to the ḥadīth of Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah ؓ who said: "I saw three moons descend in my room; and I mentioned this dream to [my father, Sayyidunā] Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ. When RasūlAllāh ؐ was laid to rest in my chamber, [Sayyidunā] Abū Bakr ؓ said, 'This is one of the moons you saw - and he is the best of them.' " [al-Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim, and in this chain: Sayyidunā Mālik ibn Anas from Sayyidunā Yahyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṣārī from Sayyidunā 'Amrah from Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah ؓ]. So naturally, the other two moons - *qamarān/qamarayn* - are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ. And they are also moons as they rest besides the Messenger of Allāh ؐ, and the superiority of whom, shines and glows so bright that the heart of every *rāfiḍī* and detractor of the *Shaykhayn* is seared by it and turned to ashes. (Mawlānā Abū Ḥasan)

The great Imām mentions this masterpiece no less than eight times in his magnum opus, *al-'Atāyah al-Nabawiyah fī al-Fatāwā al-Riḍawiyah*⁴.

Furthermore, the great Imām writes in his book *Tajalliy al-Yaqīn bi Anna Nabīyānā Sayyid al-Mursalīn*⁵:

"This humble servant (may Allāh forgive him) has written a detailed explanatory work on this issue [of *Afdaliyyah*], proving the pre-eminent status of the *Shaykhayn* [Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar عليه السلام] using many authoritative evidences from the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth in my book *Muntahā al-Taḥṣīl li Madhath al-Taḥṣīl*, consisting of 90 juz'. However, fearing the difficulty it may cause, I abridged it into a one-volume work - *Maṭla' al-Qamarayn fī Iḥānat Sabqat al-'Umarayn*."⁶

In summary, using 69 verses of the Holy Qur'ān, 235 Ahādīth, and numerous statements of the luminary scholars of the past, Imām Aḥmad Riḍā رحمته الله proves the pre-eminent rank of the two greatest Companions, namely Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar عليه السلام.

This book is itself a summary translation of *Maṭla' al-Qamarayn fī Iḥānat Sabqat al-'Umarayn*, consisting of three parts:

⁴ الحظا النبوية في الفتاوى الرضية (Bestowal of Prophetic Blessings in Riḍā's Edicts). A major Fatāwa collection of rulings in Arabic, Urdu and Persian. Originally published in twelve volumes of approximately 800 large size pages each; this has been recently republished in thirty volumes approximately 800 A4 size pages each, totalling 22,000 pages containing 6847 fatāwā, which also contain 206 monographs.

⁵ نطق اليقين بان نبينا سيد المرسلين (Radiance of Certitude that verily our Prophet is the Liege-lord of all the Messengers).

⁶ *Al-Fatāwā al-Riḍawiyah*, vol. 30, p. 132

Part A – Defining the meaning of superiority (*afḍaliyyah*)

Part B – Textual proofs establishing the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*

Part C – Further virtues and excellences of the *Shaykhayn*.

Accordingly, this work does not delve into the entirety of the detailed scholarly discussions of the original tract; rather, it aims to provide a simple summary of those discussions in order to make them more comprehensible for the wider lay audience.



Part A: Defining the Meaning of Superiority (*Afdaliyyah*)

In this part, the Imām proffers a detailed analysis of the meaning of *Afdaliyyah* (Superiority) under 10 headings; namely:

1. The Excellences of the Blessed Companions
2. The Excellences of the Family of the Prophet
3. Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity
4. Superiority in Sainthood
5. Innate Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority
6. External Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority
7. The Superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is not with reference to all aspects (*min kull al-wujūh*)
8. The Two Groups in regards to the issue of Superiority (*Tafāṭil*)
9. The Two Methodologies of Establishing Superiority
10. Dispelling the Remaining Doubts raised by the *Sanfaddiyyah*.

Part A1: The Excellences of the Illustrious Companions

Allāh chose the best of people for the companionship of His Prophets and Messengers ﷺ so that they would learn their teachings, manners and character, emulate them and transmit this inheritance to the next generation. Since the religion of Islām is to remain until the end of time, Allāh chose these individuals to be blessed with companionship of His Prophet ﷺ who would teach the next generation so that the teachings would remain until the Last Day.

It is for this reason that Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ said, “Indeed Allāh looked into the hearts of the servants and found the heart of Prophet Muḥammad ؐ to be the best of the hearts of His servants, and so He chose him ؐ for Himself and sent him ؐ as a Messenger. He then looked into the hearts of His servants after Prophet Muḥammad ؐ and found the hearts of the Companions to be the best hearts of the servants. Thus, He made them representatives of His Prophet ؐ, striving for His Din. So whatever the Muslims hold to be good then it is good with Allāh; and whatever the Muslims hold to be evil, it is evil according to Allāh.”⁷

Once Sayyidatunā ‘Ā’ishah ؓ was sat in her house in a state of sorrow. Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ sought permission to enter. She sent a message that she was feeling apprehensive. Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ said, “I am not from those who return without meeting!” So she allowed him to enter. He said, “Glad-tidings to you! Verily I heard the Prophet of Allāh ؐ say,

“‘Ā’ishah is my wife in Jannah.’ And the status of the Prophet of Allāh is honoured in the Sight of Allāh such that He would never give him ؐ a glowing ember of coal of the hellfire in his marriage.” She then said, “You have removed my sorrow, may Allāh remove your sorrows.”⁸

And in another Ḥadīth, the Prophet of Allāh ؐ has said, “Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Fear Allāh regarding my Companions! Do not make them targets of criticism after me (my departure). Whosoever loves them, loves them because of his love for me. Whosoever hates them, hates them as a result of his hatred for me. Whosoever offends them, offends me and whosoever offends me, offends Allāh. And whosoever offends Allāh, will be punished forthwith.”⁹

A lover will always find the best possible people for the companionship of his beloved. Allāh the Almighty is the All-Powerful, and His love for His Beloved ؐ is evident, therefore, the Companions of His Beloved ؐ are undoubtedly the best of the Ummah. Thus, those who criticise the blessed Companions are in fact rejecting the Power of Allāh Almighty and His love for His Beloved ؐ.

The disposition of people varies - some people accept guidance through love and affection, while others through might and firmness. So through Divine Wisdom, the Companions of the Prophet ؐ had different temperaments and personalities; some became known for their gentleness while others for their strictness. Some Companions had more *Jamāl* (beauty and

⁸ *Musnad Imām Abū Ḥanīfah*, Ḥadīth #662, p. 230.

⁷ *Musnad Imām Ahmad*, Musnad ‘Abd-Allāh Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ, Ḥadīth #3600, vol. 1, p. 379

⁹ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Bāb fī man Sabba Aṣḥab al-Nabiyy ؓ, Ḥadīth #3797, vol. 3, p. 362.

gentleness) in their nature while others had more *Jalāl* (strictness and firmness). Some Companions had other excellent qualities, attributes and privileges which are not found in anyone else.

Examples of such unique qualities include:

1. The first arrow to be shot in the way of Allāh was by Sayyidunā Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه.¹⁰
2. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ honoured Sayyidunā Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and Sayyidunā al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām رضي الله عنه by saying, "The lives of my parents are for you."¹¹
3. Sayyidunā al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه is among the disciples (*Ḥawārī*) of the Prophet ﷺ.¹²
4. Sayyidunā 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه saw Sayyidunā Jibrā'īl عليه السلام in his original form twice in his lifetime.¹³
5. The Prophet ﷺ said about Sayyidunā Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Hārithah رضي الله عنه, "The dearest to me is him and then 'Alī رضي الله عنه."¹⁴
6. In another Hadīth, "There is no one under the heavens as truthful as Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه."¹⁵

¹⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadīth #2966, p. 1586.
¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3720, vol. 2, p. 540.
¹² *Ibid.*, Hadīth #2846, vol. 2, p. 267.
¹³ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3841, vol. 5, p. 448.
¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3845, vol. 5, p. 447.
¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3827, vol. 5, p. 440.

7. Sayyidunā Ubayy ibn Ka'b رضي الله عنه surpassed all in the beauty of his recitation¹⁶, Sayyidunā Zayd ibn Thābit رضي الله عنه in acting upon the obligations¹⁷, Sayyidunā Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه in the knowledge of *Ḥalāl* and *Ḥarām*¹⁸, and Sayyidunā Abū 'Ubaydah رضي الله عنه is the *Amin* (custodian) of this Ummah.¹⁹

8. The 'Arsh (Throne) shook on the demise of Sayyidunā Sa'd ibn Mu'adh رضي الله عنه.²⁰
9. Allāh Almighty sent Salām (greetings of peace) to the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadijah رضي الله عنها.²¹
10. Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه was gifted with one of the melodies of the *Āl* (family/people) of Sayyidunā Dāwūd عليه السلام.²²
11. Sayyidunā Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه became the possessor of Prophetic secrets.²³
12. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ narrated the story of Jassāsah from Sayyidunā Tamīm al-Dārī رضي الله عنه with the words, "Tamīm al-Dārī has narrated to us..."²⁴

¹⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3809, vol. 2, p. 928.
¹⁷ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3797, vol. 5, p. 859.
¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3845, vol. 5, p. 447.
¹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Hadīth #3744, vol. 2, p. 915.
²⁰ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3803, vol. 2, p. 561.
²¹ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3820, vol. 2, p. 565.
²² *Ibid.*, Hadīth #5048, vol. 2, p. 416.
²³ *Ibid.*, Hadīth #3743, vol. 2, p. 545.
²⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadīth #2942, p. 1575.

And narrating the excellences of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr from Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ by saying, "Umar narrated to me..."²⁵

13. When Sayyidunā Julaybīb ؓ was martyred, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ carried his body proclaiming, "Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb. Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb. Julaybīb is from me and I am from Julaybīb."²⁶

May Allāh be pleased with them all and resurrect us with them and with their followers; *āmin*.

Part A2: The Excellences of the Family of the Prophet ﷺ

Any form of connection with the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is an honour in both Worlds.

Once a man saw a descendant of an Anṣārī, who was an erudite scholar of Ḥadīth in a dream. He asked, "How has Allāh dealt with you?" He replied, "He forgave me." The man asked, "For what reason?" The descendant of the Anṣārī replied, "Because of the relationship I had with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ." The man enquired, "Are you from his family?" He answered, "No." The man asked, "Then what is the nature of your relationship?" The Anṣārī replied, "Like a sheepdog to a shepherd."²⁷

The Scholars have explained the similitude as being rooted in the Prophetic saying, "The closest people to me on the Day of Judgement will be the ones who sent the most salutations upon me." And the most salutations are sent by the Scholars of Ḥadīth.²⁸

A Qurayshī slave who drank the blessed blood of the Prophet ﷺ was (by this *nisbah*) guaranteed freedom from the hellfire.²⁹

If a slave was freed from the hellfire due to merely drinking the blessed blood then what is the status of those individuals who are formed from the very same blood as that of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, i.e. those in whose bodies flows the blessed and sacred Prophetic blood?

²⁷ *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqah*, p. 242.

²⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁹ *Al-Khaṣā'is al-Kubrā, Talkhis al-Ḥabir* (Imām al-'Asqalānī), Ḥadīth #17, vol. 1, p. 168, *al-Badr al-Munir*, vol. 1, p. 464.

²⁵ *Tarikh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), vol. 30, p. 65.

²⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth #2472, p. 1341.

Some Ahādīth extolling the excellences of the Family of the Prophet ﷺ:

1. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "Indeed Fāṭimah ﷺ protected her purity so Allāh has made Hell forbidden upon her and upon her descendants."³⁰
2. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "My Lord promised me regarding my family that whosoever (of them) believes in the Oneness of Allāh and my message will never be punished."³¹
3. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to his beloved daughter Fāṭimah ﷺ, "Allāh will not punish you or your children."³²
4. In another Ḥādīth, "I asked Allāh not to enter any of my family into the Hellfire and He answered my prayer."³³
5. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once said, "I will first intercede for my family, the closest (of my family) and then those after them."³⁴
6. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ narrates, "I heard the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ supplicate: 'O Allāh, they are the family of Your Prophet, so entrust the sinful (of them) to the righteous (of them), and entrust them all to me.' Then the Prophet ﷺ said to me, 'So Allāh has granted me this.' I asked, 'What did He do?' The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ said, 'Your

³⁰ *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Imām Ḥākim), Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥādīth #4779, vol. 4, p. 135.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 132

³² *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥādīth #11685, vol. 11, p. 210.

³³ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Ḥādīth #34144, vol. 12, p. 44.

³⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥādīth #1355, vol. 12, p. 321.

Lord has done this for you and will do the same for those (of your progeny) who come after you."³⁵

The Ahādīth expounding the merits of this honourable family are innumerable. My friend, on the Day of Judgement, all lineages shall be severed; no one shall ask, 'Who is your father? Who is your grandfather?' Allāh Himself says, 'So when the Trumpet is blown, there will neither be any relationship among them that day, nor will they ask about one another.' (23:101).

However, the lineage of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ shall remain established. This is a lineage which shall never be severed. In the narration of Sayyidatunā Ṣāfiyyah ﷺ after the Prophet ﷺ ordered Sayyidunā Bi'lāl ﷺ to give the Call to Prayer (*Adhān*), he ascended the pulpit and said, "What is it with these people who believe that my lineage will be of no benefit. All lineages and ties shall be severed on the Day of Judgement except my lineage and my tie; it is intact in this world and shall remain so in the Hereafter."³⁶

Notwithstanding this, the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophetic sayings determine for us that lineage in itself is not the distinguishing factor of virtue in the Sight of Allāh, but rather only piety and God-consciousness (*taqwā*). Allāh states in the Holy Qur'ān:

O mankind! We have indeed created you from one man and one woman, and have made you into various nations and tribes so that you may know one another; indeed the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you; indeed Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (49:13).

³⁵ *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqah*, Bāb Bashāratuhum Bi al-Jannah, p. 235.

³⁶ *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, Kitāb al-Nikāh, Ḥādīth #13394, vol. 7, p. 102.

In other words, you are all from one man and one woman; these tribes and lineages were created for you to know each other better, and keep ties with relations. However, in the Sight of Allāh, the most honourable and praiseworthy is the one who is the most righteous.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The most honourable of the people is the most righteous from them."³⁷

He ﷺ has also said, "Know that you are not better than any red or black person except by virtue of piety."³⁸

He ﷺ has also said, "All Muslims are brothers [of one another]. No one is better than the other but for piety."³⁹

In another Ḥadīth, "Indeed Allāh does not look at your appearances or your wealth, but He looks into your hearts and your actions."⁴⁰

Moreover, it is in another Ḥadīth, "O People! Your Lord is One and your father is one. Listen! No Arab is better than a non-Arab, nor is a black person better than a red person, except through piety. The best among you in the Sight of Allāh is the one with the most piety."⁴¹

In another narration, "Allāh will not ask about your lineages or your ties, but He will ask about your actions. Indeed the best

among you in the Sight of Allāh is the one who is the most pious."⁴²

He ﷺ has also said, "If someone's actions slow him down, then his lineage will not speed him up."⁴³

Moreover, "My household assume they are closest to me, but this is not the case. Indeed the closest person to me is the most pious, whoever he is, and wherever he may be."⁴⁴

If lineage was the determinant factor of someone's status then the status of Sayyidatunā Fāṭimah (رضي الله عنها), Sayyidatunā Zaynab (رضي الله عنها), Sayyidatunā Ruqayyah (رضي الله عنها) and Sayyidatunā Umm Kulthūm (رضي الله عنها) ought to be higher than that of Sayyidunā 'Alī (رضي الله عنه). Additionally, the status of the grandsons of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, Sayyidunā Imām al-Ḥasan and Sayyidunā Imām al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنهما), should also be higher than that of their father but this is rejected by the consensus of both the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Tafdīlīs⁴⁵. Indeed the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has granted Sayyidunā 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) superiority to his two beloved grandsons, confirming that lineage is not the critical factor in determining someone's status.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "These two sons of mine, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (رضي الله عنهما) are the leaders of the youth of Jannah, and their father is superior to them."⁴⁶

³⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Akhḫāq, Ḥadīth #5623, vol. 3, p. 40.

³⁸ *Ibid*. Ḥadīth #5629, vol. 3, p. 41.

³⁹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 4, p. 25.

⁴⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Birr, wa al-Ṣīlah wa al-Ādāb, p. 1387.

⁴¹ *Musnad Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, Ḥadīth #17315, vol. 6, p. 122.

⁴² *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Akhḫāq, Ḥadīth #5623, vol. 3, p. 43.

⁴³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Dhikr wa al-Du'ā, Ḥadīth #2699, p. 1447.

⁴⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #241, vol. 20, p. 120.

⁴⁵ A heterodox sect that believe in the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī (رضي الله عنه) over the *Shaykhayn* – Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما).

⁴⁶ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Ḥadīth #34242, vol. 12, p. 52.7

However, the natural love is greater for close family members than it is for others, but this is not what is being contested. The essence of honour and dignity is in piety and God-consciousness. It is for this reason the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "O 'Alī! Fāṭimah is more beloved to me, but you are more honoured in my eyes."⁴⁷

The fatherhood of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is not only physical but also spiritual; and the latter bond is more important and eminent than the former. All Muslims are like children of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ; nurtured by his spiritual blessings. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "I am to you like a father, teaching you."⁴⁸

It is in a rare (*shādh*) recitation of the verse 33:6, "*The Prophet is closer to the Muslims than their own lives, and his wives are their mothers (and he is their father).*"⁴⁹

The scholars say that from the tekonyms (*kunā*) of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is *Abū al-Mu'min* (The Father of the Believers).

When a person is delivered from the darkness of desires and steps into the expansive land of piety, and after this 'spiritual birth' feeds on the Dhikr of Allāh, leaving the food of worldly love, purifies his blood by nourishing it with the pure milk of Sharī'ah, then his spiritual lineage becomes stronger; and he becomes a beloved son of the Muḥammadan upbringing (*tarbiyah Muḥammadiyah*). This lineage is more eminent and precious than the physical lineage. It is for this reason a

⁴⁷ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith #7675, vol. 5, p. 380.

⁴⁸ *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Kitāb al-Ṭahārah, Hadith #7, p37.

⁴⁹ *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 6, p. 500.

scholar's honour is greater than the honour of a lay person of prophetic descent (*Sayyid*)⁵⁰.

It is narrated in a Hadith, "The *Āl* (family) of Muḥammad (ﷺ) is every righteous person (*Āl Muḥammad Kullu Taqīyy*)."⁵¹ Therefore, no Companions are deprived from being part of the Prophetic family; they are all from the Prophet's (ﷺ) family. Imām al-ʿArif Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suharwardī (رحمته الله) says in *Fiṣṣat al-Hudā wa 'Aqīdat Arbāb al-Tuqā*, "Relating Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام) to the Prophet (ﷺ) through Companionship is more complete (*Akmal*) than through his kinship..."

⁵⁰ i.e. a non-Scholar

⁵¹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Hadith #3332, vol.2, p. 295.

Part A3: Understanding the Difference between the Quality of Merits & Excellences and their Quantity

Certain virtues and excellences are greater than a thousand other excellences. Illustrative examples from the *Aḥādīth* include:

1. To stand for an hour in the ranks of a Muslim army is more rewarding than a thousand days spent in Qiyām (standing in prayer); and to spend one night watching over (the Muslim ranks) is more rewarding than a thousand days spent in Qiyām and fasting.⁵²
2. To tie a horse at the boundary of the disbeliever's territory (at the time of combat) is more rewarding than an entire month of fasting and nights spent in vigil worship.⁵³
3. To serve a scholar even for a moment is more rewarding than a thousand days of (personal) struggle.
4. An hour's study of an *ʿĀlim* (scholar), even while reclining in comfort, is more rewarding than an *ʿābid*'s 70 years of worship.⁵⁴
5. One fast in the month of Ramaḍān is more rewarding than fasting the entirety of any of the Sacred Months,⁵⁵

⁵² *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Jihād, Ḥadīth 10506, vol. 4, p. 122.

⁵³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-ʿAmārah, Ḥadīth #1913, p. 1059.

⁵⁴ *Jamīʿ al-Aḥādīth*, Ḥarf Sīm, Ḥadīth #12947, vol. 7, p. 207.

⁵⁵ Months of Ḥarām (Sanctity) – Dhū'l Qa'dah, Dhū'l Ḥijjah, Muḥarram and Rajab [As mentioned in the verse: "Indeed the number of months before Allāh is twelve - in the Book of Allāh - since the day He created the heavens and the

and fasting one day in the Sacred Months is more rewarding than fasting the entirety of any other month.⁵⁶

6. To fast in the first ten days of Dhū al-Ḥijjah is more rewarding than fasting an entire year. To fast on a Thursday, Friday or Saturday in the sacred months is more rewarding than 120 years of worship. A supererogatory (*nafl*) act of worship in Ramaḍān is rewarded equally to a compulsory (*fard*) act of worship (in any other month) and a Fard act of worship (in Ramaḍān) is multiplied at least 70 times.⁵⁷
7. One Rak'ah of prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā is equal to 5,000 Rak'āt; in al-Masjid al-Nabawī it is equal to 50,000; in al-Masjid al-Ḥarām it is equal to a 100,000 and in the Holy Ka'bah it is equal to 2,000,000 Rak'āt.⁵⁸
8. One fast of Ramaḍān in al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, is equal to 1,000 months of fasts outside the blessed city, and one Jumū'ah prayer in the sacred city is equal to 1,000 Jumū'ah prayers outside the blessed city.⁵⁹
9. Performing prayer after performing Siwāk multiplies the reward by 27 times.⁶⁰

earth, of which four are sacred... (Sūrat al-Tawbah - 9:36), also mentioned in a Ḥadīth in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* #4662 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* #1679]

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⁵⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-'Ilm, Ḥadīth #27785.

⁵⁸ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, Ḥadīth #20219, vol. 8, p. 226.

⁵⁹ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Faḍā'il, Ḥadīth #34818, vol. 12, p. 106.

⁶⁰ *Shu'ab al-Imān* (Imām al-Bayhaqī), Ḥadīth #2773, vol. 3, p. 26.

10. A Ṣaḥābī spending a handful in the path of Allāh carries more reward than a non-Ṣaḥābī spending gold equivalent to the size of Mount Uhud.⁶¹

11. A man accepted Islām and partook in a battle. He fought in the battle until he was martyred. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "His actions are few but his reward is great."⁶²

12. It is narrated that Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ has said, "By Allāh! Abū Bakr's one day and night is superior to the entire life of 'Umar."⁶³

13. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ once said, "The Archangel Jibrā'il ؑ just came to me and I asked, 'O Jibrā'il! Mention some of the excellences of 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.' So he replied, 'Even if I was to spend the amount of time, that Prophet Nūḥ ؑ spent in his community,⁶⁴ I would still not be able to completely describe or relay the excellences of 'Umar; and indeed 'Umar is but a good deed from the good deeds of Abū Bakr (ؓ).'"⁶⁵

Using such types of Aḥadīth is valid in extolling excellences and virtues (*faḍā'il*).⁶⁶

⁶¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth #6383, p. 1258. In a variant version, the words are "...or even half of a handful..."

⁶² *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-jihād, Ḥadīth #10637, vol. 4, p. 132.

⁶³ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Bāb Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah, Ḥadīth #35610, vol. 12, p. 493.

⁶⁴ 950 years. (*Sūrah al-'Ankabūt* - 29:14)

⁶⁵ *Musnad Abū Ya'īā*, Musnad 'Ammār Ibn Yāsir ؓ, Ḥadīth #1600, vol. 2, p. 119.

⁶⁶ Kitāb al-Adhkār - Imām al-Nawawī

Part A4: Superiority in Sainthood (*Wilāyah*)

To turn away from creation and to turn to the Creator is called '*Sayr ilā-Allāh*' (Journey 'to' Allāh). The apex of this journey is called, '*Fanā fi'llāh*' (Annihilation 'in' Allāh). All the Awliyā are equal in this aspect. When everything other than Allāh perishes from one's thoughts and he steps further in *Fanā fi'llāh* then this is called, '*Sayr fi'llāh*' (Journey 'in' Allāh). From this point the relative closeness to Allāh they have achieved is differentiated; the more a person advances along this path, the closer he is to Allāh.

While some continue to advance, others are instructed to continue their journey and also return to the creation; this is called, '*Sayr min-Allāh*' (Journey 'from' Allāh). From this stems the different spiritual chains (*Salāsif*). Even though this is a separate virtue ('*Sayr min-Allāh*'), it does not mean that their 'Journey in Allāh' is superior to that of the others.

Has it not been observed that the caliphs of Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ; Imām al-Ḥusayn and Khwajā Ḥasan al-Baṣrī ؓ were conferred with *Khilāfah*, whereas no spiritual chain has begun from Imām al-Ḥasan ؓ, even though the latter's closeness to Allāh is, without a shadow of doubt, greater than that of Khwajā Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. In addition to this, in the light of Aḥadīth, Imām al-Ḥasan's ؓ status is also proven to be higher than that of Imām al-Ḥusayn ؓ.

This is taken from our master, the Gnostic, Shaykh Abū al-Ḥusayn Ahmad-e-Nūrī ؓ.

Part A5: Innate Characteristics are not the Criterion for Determining Superiority

Wisdom, courage, generosity and other special traits are not distinguishing factors of virtue and pre-eminence. This because these traits may also be found in non-Muslims. The leadership of Kisrā, the courage and prowess of Rustan and the generosity of al-Hātim are well-known. If we were to take these as the yardstick to measure superiority, it would render some disbelievers superior to some Companions; something that is patently absurd.

Part A6: External Characteristics are Not the Criterion for Determining Superiority

Undoubtedly, being related to an honourable person, particularly the Prophets, is an immense virtue. But this virtue is an external virtue and not a personal one. Therefore, the wrongful acts of a family member will have no effect in itself on the status of a person nor will the excellences of his family elevate his rank.

It is for this reason that till today, no one has regarded Sayyidunā 'Uthmān's ﷺ status higher than that of the *Shaykhayn* despite the fact that the wives of the latter were not from the blessed family of the Prophet ﷺ and Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ﷺ was blessed with two daughters of the Prophet ﷺ being given to him in marriage.

Therefore, establishing an individual's status (exclusively) by reference to who his wife and children may be, is incorrect. However, when other superior virtues are present, then this

quality can be (and will be) used as a supplementary virtue but not as an independent virtue of excellence.

The wives of Sayyidunā Nūh ﷺ and his son, Kanʿān were all disbelievers but this did not tarnish his status.

The children and wives of Sayyidunā Yaʿqūb ﷺ were all righteous but they are not given superiority over Sayyidunā Nūh ﷺ.

Part A7: The Superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is not with Reference to being so in all Aspects

The status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ﷺ is not higher than the status of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ in all aspects (*Min Kull al-Wujūh*) because there are numerous qualities of Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ not found in any other Companion.

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ was a reflection of the verse, "*And We exalted for you your remembrance*" (94:4) to such a degree that it is virtually impossible to gather all of his excellences. However, mentioning the beloved is to bring one closer to the beloved and a means of obtaining Divine blessings.

Those who believe that the *Shaykhayn* have a higher status than Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ in all aspects (*min jamīʿ al-wujūh*) should attempt to reconcile their claim with the following:

With respect to whom did the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ say, "People are from different trees, and he and I are from one tree"⁶⁷

⁶⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Ḥadīth #32943, vol. 11, p. 279.

Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the branch from the Prophetic tree and the trunk of the Prophetic family.

Whom did the Prophet of Allāh ؑ send with an army; and when that beloved left his eyesight, did the Messenger of Allāh ؑ, in love, raise his hands and supplicate, "O Allāh! Do not let me pass from this world till I see him"⁶⁸ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the beloved of Allāh and His Prophet ؑ.

With respect to whom did the Prophet of Allāh ؑ say, "Allāh has placed the children of every Prophet in their loins, and placed my family in his back"⁶⁹ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the father of the great Imāms ؑ.

Who was given the Prophetic glad-tiding, "You are the distributor of the Garden and the Hellfire"⁷⁰ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the leader of good, the dispeller of evil.

Who was the one instructed by the one who ascended the Heavens during the night of al-Mi'rāj (the Ascension) ؑ to climb on his shoulders and destroy the idols that were on the roof of the Holy Ka'bah? And when he climbed upon the blessed shoulders he said, "If I wanted to I could have touched the boundaries of the Heavens"⁷¹ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the one stationed on a lofty rank.

Who was the one, when not granted permission to partake in the Battle of Tabūk, said, "O Prophet of Allāh! Are you leaving me behind with the women and children?" The Prophet of Allāh ؑ said, "Are you not pleased that in my eyes your station is like

the station of Prophet Hārūn ؑ with Prophet Mūsā ؑ; save that there is no Prophet after me"⁷² Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the brother of Sayyidunā Ahmad ؑ and his caliph.

Who is the guardian of all Muslims by the narration, "He is the guardian (*Mawlā*) of those for whom I am a guardian. O Allāh! Befriend those who befriend him, and make him Your enemy who is his enemy"⁷³ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the leader and guardian of the Muslims.

Who is he, for whom the Prophet of Allāh ؑ said, on the eve of the conquest of Khaybar, "Tomorrow (morning) I will give this standard to that person at whose hands we will gain victory. He loves Allāh and His Prophet ؑ and he is the beloved of Allāh and His Prophet ؑ." The following morning, the Prophet ؑ called him and gave him the standard⁷⁴ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the protector of Islām, the Lion of Allāh.

Who was the one for whom the Prophet of Allāh ؑ made it permissible to enter the Masjid in the state of *Janābah* (major ritual impurity)?⁷⁵ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the purified and the purifier.

Who was the one that when the Prophet of Allāh ؑ made the Companions brothers of each other, came and said, "You have not made me a brother of anyone." The Prophet ؑ said, "You are my brother in this world and the Hereafter"⁷⁶ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ, the brilliant moon of the Banū Hāshim.

⁶⁸ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, vol. 5, p. 412.

⁶⁹ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Fadā'il, Ḥadīth #32889, vol. 11, p. 275.

⁷⁰ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Ḥadīth #36471, vol. 13, p. 66.

⁷¹ *Al-Musnad* of Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Ḥadīth #644, vol. 1, p. 183

⁷² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Maghāzī, Ghazwah Tabūk, Ḥadīth #4416, vol. 3, p. 144.

⁷³ *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, Kitāb al-Khaṣā'is, Ḥadīth #8464, vol. 5, p. 130.

⁷⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-jihād

⁷⁵ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, al-Manāqib 'An al-Rasul ؑ, Ḥadīth #3748, vol. 5, p. 408.

⁷⁶ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Ḥadīth #3741, vol. 5, p. 401.

Who was the one who excelled all the Companions in giving verdicts and judgements, to such a degree that Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه sought protection from those difficult cases in which he was not present⁷⁷ and about whom Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه said many a time, "If he was not present then 'Umar would have perished"⁷⁸ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the possessor of the soundest acumen.

Who was the one who manifested his might by plucking the gate of Khaybar from the walls of the fortress and using it as a shield?⁷⁹ Indeed he is, none other than Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the great valiant warrior.

Who was the one who fought with such courage and strength in the battle of Uhud, that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The only sword is the sword of *Dhū al-Fiḡār*, the only youth is 'Alī the oft-attacker (*Lā Sayfa illā Dhū al-Fiḡār wa Lā Fatā illā 'Alī al-Karrār*)."⁸⁰ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the Lion of Allāh, the strength of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Who is the one who has been made the distributor of the water of the fount al-Kawthar, thereby quenching the thirst of Muslims on the Day of Judgement.⁸¹ Indeed he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the cloud of generosity, the sea of benevolence.

Who is the one who will be given control of the 'Bridge' (Ṣirāṭ), such that without his consent no one will be allowed to cross

⁷⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-'Ilm, Ḥadīth #29495, vol. 10, p. 133.

⁷⁸ *Al-Ist'āb fī Ma'rifa al-Ashāb*, p. 339.

⁷⁹ *Al-Riyāḍ al-Nadrah*, vol. 1, p. 265.

⁸⁰ *Al-Musannaf* - Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ḥadīth #32812, vol. 12, p. 85.

⁸¹ *Strat Ibn Hishām*, Ghazwah Uhud, vol. 2, p. 87.

⁸¹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat* - Al-Ṭabarānī, Ḥadīth #188, vol. 1, p. 68.

it?⁸² Yes indeed, he is Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the guide on the straight path.

Sayyidunā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه says, "Sayyidunā 'Alī possessed 18 qualities that are unshared with anyone else."⁸³

Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه once said, "'Alī has been given three (exclusive) qualities. Possessing any of them is dearer to me than possessing red camels." Sayyidunā 'Umar رضي الله عنه was asked about those qualities, so he replied, "(i) The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave his beloved daughter to him in marriage. (ii) He is allowed to stay in the masjid in a state that I am not permitted. (iii) He was granted the standard of Khaybar."⁸⁴

Imām Ahmad ibn Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb al-Qastalānī writes in *al-Mawāhib*, "...thus he صلى الله عليه وسلم is the Final Prophet but his status was already known to the previous Prophets and Messengers. He صلى الله عليه وسلم is the treasure of secrets; through his mediation the affairs of the universe are fulfilled. He صلى الله عليه وسلم is in control of all the affairs and all goodness returns to him صلى الله عليه وسلم. When he صلى الله عليه وسلم intends to do something then there is no one who can go against his decision."⁸⁵

Then this station was granted to Sayyidunā 'Alī رضي الله عنه. All the *Aḡṭāb* (The Poles) are under his command. After him, the affairs of the world were conferred to the Awliyā through him. It is for this reason that the people of need turn towards them and ask for their help. Then this great station was given to our master and guide, the beloved of *Dhū al-Jalāl* (Almighty), the leader of all

⁸² *Lisān al-Mizān*, Ḥadīth #118, vol. 1, p. 51

⁸³ *Mizān al-'Itidāl*, Ḥadīth #75, vol. 1, p. 28.

⁸⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat* - Al-Ṭabarānī, Ḥadīth #84302, vol. 6, p. 180.

⁸⁵ *Al-Musannaf* - Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ḥadīth #36, vol. 7, p. 500.

⁸⁵ *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, al-Maqṣad al-Sābi', vol. 2, p. 545.

the *Aqtāb* and *Abdāl*, the one who personified the inner secrets of the Holy Qur'ān, the Qiblah of our hearts, the secret of secrets, the light of lights, the master of Jinn and Humans, the *Chawth*, the *Qutb*, the Reviver of Religion, Muhy'iddīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥasanī al-Ḥusaynī al-Jilānī ؒ.

Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī in *Nuzhat al-Khātir*, Imām al-Shaṭṭanawī in *Bahjat al-Asrār*, Imām al-Yāfā'ī in his books and Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaq al-Muḥaddith al-Dihlawī in *Akhbār al-Akhyār* write that the great Ghawth once said, "When someone seeks my mediation during hardships, his hardships shall be removed. When someone calls upon me in times of need, I will come to his assistance. Whosoever prays two cycles of prayer after the Maghrib prayer, thereafter sending blessings and salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ, takes 11 steps in the direction of 'Iraq (Baghdad), mentioning my name (at each step), then Allāh shall fulfill his desires."⁸⁶

You have said the truth O the beloved son of al-Muṣṭafā ؐ! Come to our rescue! Come to our rescue! O my master! Come to our rescue!

⁸⁶ *Bahjat al-Asrār*, p. 197.

Part A8: The Two Groups in relation to the Issue of Superiority⁸⁷

Initially there were only two groups in relation the issue of superiority:

- (i) The Ahl al-Sunnah, who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior of all the Companions;
- (ii) The Taḥḍilis who believe Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ to be the most superior.

However, over time these two split into four groups. From the Ahl al-Sunnah there came to be individuals who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior in all aspects (*min kull al-wujūh*) and this erroneous belief has been discussed in Part A7.

From the Taḥḍilis branched a group who acknowledge the order of Khilāfah, but believe that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ is superior

⁸⁷ The Imām states the four held opinions regarding superiority. Initially there were two:

1. The 'Ahl al-Sunnah' - that Absolute Superiority (*Aḥḍāl Muṭlaq*) rests with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq ؑ
2. Ahl al-Taḥḍiliyyah' (Rāfiḍis or Shī'ah) - that the Absolute Superiority rests with Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ

Subdivisions that have arisen from the initial two:

3. The 'Extreme' branched from the Ahl al-Sunnah- that the 'Best in All Aspects' (*Aḥḍāl Min Kull al-Wujūh*) is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq ؑ
4. The 'Sanḥadīyyah' that branched from the Taḥḍiliyyah- that the caliphate of the first three is correct, and that they had Partial Excellences which made them the best only in One Aspect (*Aḥḍāl Min Wajhin*). However, the Absolute Superiority lies with Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ.

The word Sanḥadīyyah is a new word coined by the Imām himself, as these people call themselves 'Sunnis' but in actual fact their beliefs are like the Rāfiḍis' (Shī'ah)

in only one aspect, whereas absolute superiority remains with Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام.

This last opinion was taken by some to mean that they should be regarded as being from the Ahl al-Sunnah and not from the Taḡdiliyyah, though their stance is in actual fact like the stance of the Taḡdilis.

For this reason we first need to define the meaning of Superiority, then rebut the false notions of this new sect with overwhelming proofs. Thereafter, Allāh Willing, the evidence in support of the absolute superiority of the *Shaykhayn* will be presented and the opponents will have nothing to resort to.

The Meaning of Superiority

Lexically, *Faḍl* means 'additional' and *Afḍal* means 'having more of something relative to others'. Sometimes we are able to leave the superiority unqualified, while at other times we are required to qualify this superiority with reference to a particular attribute. This can be illustrated as follows:

Take for example, an expert horse rider and an unparalleled erudite scholar. When we are asked who is the best, of course, the answer would be the scholar. We do not need to specify this superiority. However, when we want to express the superiority of the horse rider, we would need to specify the superiority, "The Horse rider is superior to the scholar in *horse riding*." Without this qualification, it would mean, "The horse rider is superior to the scholar" – a statement which is patently incorrect.

The reason is because excellences are relative in their nobility. So when we are asked about the absolute superiority (which is

inherent when no qualification is made) between two who possess different qualities and excellences, we mean the one who is the noblest of them. If and when we do determine the other to be superior, it will be qualified by reference to a particular aspect in which they are superior and not unrestrictedly. By saying that a person has partial (*juẓ'ī*) excellence we mean he is superior only with reference to that particular attribute. This is called '*Afḍal bi al-Ṭaqyid*', superior with specification.

Absolute superiority needs to be understood precisely. What does it in fact mean?

The people of this world define it in worldly terms. They believe, the most superior is the one who possesses the most wealth, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān about Fir'awn (Pharaoh), "*And Fir'awn said, 'O my people! Is not the kingdom of Egypt for me, and these rivers that flow beneath me? So do you not see that I am better than him, for he is lowly, and he does not seem to talk plainly?'"* (43:51-52)

In another place, Allāh mentions about the people of Makkah, "*And they said, 'Why was the Qur'ān not sent down upon some chieftain of these two towns (Makkah and Ṭā'if)?'"* (43:31)

The arrogant consider that superiority lies with material and physical status and the nobility of one's origin, even if it is contrary to his own claim - "Iblīs said, '*I am better than him; You made me from fire, and You have created him from clay.*'" (38:76)

We, the Ahl al-Sunnah, believe superiority lies with the one who is the most honoured, closest and respected in the Sight of Allāh. He says, "*And the end is only towards your Lord.*" (53:42)

If a person possesses a multitude of excellences but which do not make him closer to Allāh, they are futile. Have you not understood the excellence of knowledge in the light of the Holy Qur'ān? "*Proclaim, 'Are the knowledgeable and the ignorant equal?'*" (39:9). Despite this, the knowledge of Iblīs, teacher of the angels for many years, did not make him closer to Allāh. A person may spend his whole life in the worship of Allāh yet another person may perform a single deed that draws him closer to Allāh than the first person – the Ahl al-Sunnah would assert that absolute superiority rests with the second person. Allāh says, "*The Night of Destiny is better than a thousand months.*" (97:3).

The quantity of reward (i.e. an increase of heavenly rewards like an increase in food, clothes, palaces in Jannah, hūr of Jannah) can never be the determinant factor of absolute superiority.

Evidence One: We ask people with sound intellect whether such things (as mentioned above i.e. heavenly food, clothes etc.) have any reality in increasing one's status? These things are only the attraction of the imperfect. The 'Men of Allāh' actually consider worship to attain Jannah and its bounties as '*Hidden Polytheism*' (*Shirk Khafī*).

It is stated in the Torah, "Who is more unjust than the one who worships Me to attain a place in Paradise and freedom from Hell? If I was not to create Paradise and Hell, will I not be worthy of worship?"

The Sūfis say that one will find many '*Abds* (slaves of) *al-Rahmān*, many '*Abds* of *al-Rahīm* and many '*Abds* of *al-Razzāq*, but the '*Abds* of Allāh are rare.

The verse "*Therefore worship Me alone*" (29:56), negates not only the '*shirk*' of worshipping other than Him but also the '*shirk*' of purpose (*maqṣad*). In other words, 'Worship Me alone and desire only Me through My worship.' Those whose hearts are filled with thoughts of anyone or anything other than Allāh, are not worthy of entering the Divine Presence, "Those who turns towards anyone besides Us are not from Us."⁸⁸

The state of the Companions, especially the state of the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, was far greater than merely having their hearts inclined towards the attainment of such imperfect objectives. Nay, in fact their sole objective and their only intent was to attain Divine Closeness and Pleasure. Allāh mentions about the state of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq رضي الله عنه, "*Who gives his wealth in order to be pure. And no one has done a favour to him, for which he should be compensated. He desires only to please his Lord, the Supreme.*" (92:18-20).

Evidence Two: The great Muḥaddith, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṭāhir [al-Fattānī] al-Gujarātī writes in his masterpiece, *Majma' Biḥār al-Anwār*, "An increase of reward does not necessarily establish absolute superiority. It is quite possible that the *maqḥūl* (superseded) has greater reward."⁸⁹ Allāmah Ibn Ḥajar Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Makī writes the same.⁹⁰ Thus if the determinant factor of superiority is (having) an abundance of heavenly reward, then how would it be rationally possible that the superseded (*maqḥūl*) be able to attain it as well.

⁸⁸ Imām Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī narrates a statement from the Sūfis in his *Tafsīr*, "Those who turn towards anyone besides Allāh is a 'polytheist'." (*Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, *Sūrah Yūsuf*, verse 111, vol. 3, p. 162).

⁸⁹ *Majma' Biḥār al-Anwār*, *Faṣl fī al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 5, p. 738.

⁹⁰ *Al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, p. 213.

Evidence Three: It is the consensus of the Ahl al-Sunnah that the blessed Companions are the most superior of the Ummah. If superiority is to be determined with reference to the amount of reward (*thawāb*) accumulated, then what is the meaning of the Ḥadīth in which the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "A day shall come when the reward for the one practising (Islām), will be equal to that of 50 practising men." He ﷺ was asked, "O Messenger of Allāh! (Would this be the reward of 50 practising men) from them or from us?" The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ replied, "No, but from you."⁹¹

This Ḥadīth has been cited by the scholars as evidence of the fact that an accumulated *thawāb* (reward) does not in itself mean an increase in excellence and superiority.

Evidence Four: One should ask whether Divine Closeness is better or more of the aforesaid heavenly rewards? Imagine two servants of a king. One is given "only" a thousand gold coins but given a place near the throne while the other is given many thousands of gold coins but a place further away. Who is better? Thus having more reward can not be the determinant factor of superiority.

Evidence Five: There is a hierarchy of ranking even among the Angels. "Should I not inform you about the most superior (*arḥāḍ*) Angel? He is Jibrā'īl (جبرائيل)." ⁹² The books of 'Aqā'id mention about the superiority of men and Angels and it is in a Ḥadīth Qudṣī, that Allāh has said, "My believing servant is more beloved to Me than some of My Angels."⁹³

⁹¹ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhi*, Kitāb al-Tafsīr Min Sūrah al-Mā'idah, Ḥadīth #3069, vol. 5, p. 42.

⁹² *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Bāb al-'Ayn, vol. 11, p. 129.

⁹³ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, Ḥadīth #6634, vol. 5, p. 79.

What meaning of superiority shall we take in this instance? The Angels are not as such rewarded for their actions. Therefore we have to assert that 'superiority' is by reference to *Qurb* (closeness) to Allāh; furthermore, it is only this *Qurb* to Allāh that establishes the rank of an individual whether from the angels or humans⁹⁴.

Evidence Six: The scholars have used the verse, "*Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you*" (49:13) and the Ḥadīth, "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of those who have passed and all those who are to come, and they are the best of those in the heavens and earth besides the Prophets and Messengers"⁹⁵ to prove the pre-eminent status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ. Such evidence has always been used to prove his precedence above all the Companions.

Undoubtedly, being 'the most honoured in the Sight of Allāh' and being 'the closest to Allāh' are synonymous. Thus, 'the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh' must be the one who is 'the closest to Allāh' and not the one who has been given a greater share of heavenly rewards. Moreover, being the most superior of the previous and the latter, of the earthly and celestial realms, after all the Prophets and Messengers cannot be as a result of a mere abundance of such heavenly rewards.

Consequently, it proves that the scholars have pronounced the *Shaykhayn* as 'the most superior' due to their closeness to Allāh and not determinatively on account of their rewards; otherwise this would entail a flaw in the rationale. This is because the

⁹⁴ As we see the Prophets and Messengers being the foremost, followed by the Archangels, then the Rightly-Guided Caliphs et seq.

⁹⁵ *Jāmi' al-Jawāmi'*, Ḥarf al-Hamzah, Ḥadīth #124, vol. 1, p. 39.

claim (*da'wā*) otherwise would be that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ has accumulated the most rewards, yet the evidence (*dalīl*) is that he is the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh and therefore this would necessitate the addition of an extra proposition, 'the most honourable must be given the greatest rewards.'

However, the scholars have completed their evidences on this conclusion (that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ is the most superior due to his closeness to Allāh) and no one has ever added such a proposition.⁹⁶

Evidence Seven: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ mentioned his own superiority to all other Prophets using the words, "I have been given superiority over the other Prophets in six respects: I have been given words which are concise but comprehensive in meaning (*Jawāmī' al-Kalīm*), I have been helped by awe (in the hearts of enemies), spoils (of war) have been made lawful for me, the earth has been made for me clean and a place of worship, I have been sent to all of mankind and the chain of Prophethood is completed with me."⁹⁷

And in a variant Ḥadīth, the words, "I have preserved the intercession for my followers till the Day of Judgement,"⁹⁸ have been narrated.

It is evident that the superiority of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to the other Prophets is due to his closeness to Allāh and not due

⁹⁶ The *intaj al-da'wā* would be thus: al-Ṣiddīq is al-Atqā (most God-conscious) and every Atqā is Akram 'IndAllāh (most honoured in the sight of Allāh) and every Akram 'IndAllāh has greater reward; therefore, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ has greater reward. This is *Qiyās Murakkab* and hence void and unaccepted. (see Evidence 8)

⁹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Bāb al-Masājīd, Ḥadīth #523, p. 266.

⁹⁸ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #6674, vol. 7, p. 154.

to an increase of heavenly food, clothes, goblets, trays, ewers, cups, well-matched companions and palaces.

Similarly, Sayyidunā 'Abd-Allāh Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has said, "Allāh has preferred (*Faḍḍala*) Sayyidunā Muḥammad (ﷺ) over all the Prophets and over the dwellers of the heavens." They said: "O Ibn 'Abbās, how did He prefer him to the dwellers of the heavens (*ahl al-samā'*)?" He replied, "Allāh Most High said: 'And the one among them (dwellers of the heavens) who says, "I am a god beside Allāh" - We shall reward him with hell; this is how We punish the unjust' (21:29) but He said, 'We have indeed, for your sake (O Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ), bestowed a clear victory. So that Allāh may forgive, for your sake, the sins of those before you and those after you...' (48:1-2)" The people asked, "And how did He prefer him ؓ over the other Prophets?" He replied: "Allāh Most High says, 'And We sent every Noble Messenger with the same language as his people, so that he may clearly explain to them' (14:4), but Allāh causes to stray whoever He wishes. As for the Beloved ﷺ, He state: 'And (O Prophet) We have not sent you except with a Prophethood that covers the entire mankind.' (34:28)."⁹⁹

Thus, now by the testimony of two witnesses; the sacred text and the intellect, it has been proven that superiority is due to one's closeness and honour in the Divine Presence and not due to the heavenly rewards.

Evidence Eight: If it was the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah that Mawā'Alī ؓ is superior (over the *Shaykhayn*) and his closeness and honour is greater and that the *Shaykhayn* only surpass him in an accumulation of rewards, then all the proofs and evidences aforementioned and those that have been

⁹⁹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #11610, vol. 11, p. 191.

transmitted and circulated amongst the *Akbār* and *Aṣḡhir* scholars of the saved sect (the Ahl al-Sunnah) would all be turned on their heads at once; those for whom they have proven an abundance of reward, would now be established as the most honoured, and those they have established as the most honoured, would now be given the only distinctive feature of having accumulated the most rewards!

Hypothetically, (if the above was to be accepted) then the evidence and the consequential claim (*intāḡ al-da'wā*) would be thus:

al-Siddiq is 'al-Atqā' (the most God-conscious) and every *Atqā* is 'Akram 'indAllāh' (most honoured in the sight of Allāh) and every 'Akram 'indAllāh' has greater reward; therefore, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ has greater reward. Now the result would be that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ has been withdrawn from his being the most honoured, despite the fact this was what was claimed and by virtue of the second proposition (every 'Akram 'indAllāh' has greater reward), 'Akram' is defined as possession of greater reward, and now Mawlā 'Alī ؓ who is regarded (by the opposition) as 'Akram' is now only 'Akram' in reference to an abundance of rewards.

This is *Qiyās Murakkab* (a complex syllogism) and hence void and unaccepted.

Allāh forbid that such absurdities ever occur at the hands of even a novice from the Ahl al-Sunnah!

Evidence Nine: This statement (that Mawlā 'Alī ؓ is 'Akram' in the context of having a greater number of heavenly rewards) is not even accepted by the Taḡfīliyyah.

It is important in a *Mizā'* (a matter of controversy) that there exists a difference of opinion in the *Mā fihī al-Tanāzu'* (the subject matter of dispute).

So for example, if we establish kingship of the East for Zayd and the opposition establish sultanate of the West for 'Amr, then where is there any disagreement, controversy or opposition in this?

A disagreement will only arise if we establish one undivided rule of Zayd, while at the very same time the opposition establish it for 'Amr.

If we were to ask the Taḡfīliyyah if the inferred meaning of their deeming Mawlā 'Alī ؓ as 'Afḡal' is an 'increase of reward, bounties and benefit,' they would dismiss this absurd interpretation and riposte: Our deeming Mawlā 'Alī ؓ as *Afḡal* is in the context and meaning of his lofty station, his pre-eminence and his closeness and honour in the Sight of Allāh. If the Ahl al-Sunnah agreed with this stance of theirs, then why does the controversy and dispute which has continued for a thousand years or more still exist!

Evidence Ten: The issue is that they (the *Sanḡaḡḡiyyah*) must have read the statements of our scholars regarding 'an increase of reward' and tried to understand the statements for themselves. The question is that if they refer to the supposed statement of Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlawī in *Takmil al-Īmān* then why do they not read the explicit statements in *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muhriqah* and *Majma' al-Bihar* in refutation of 'abundance of reward' being the determinant factor of *Afḡaliyyah*?

It is in *Sharḥ al-Maqāsīd*, "The meaning of *Afḍaliyyah* (superiority) is the honour in the Sight of Allāh and more rewards."¹⁰⁰

Shaykh al-Munāwī writes in *al-Taysīr* under the Hadīth, "The most righteous of all Muslims are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ", "In other words, they are the loftiest of all Muslims in terms of merit and the loftiest of them, after the Prophets, in terms of their status."¹⁰¹

Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq al-Dihlawī, the great Muḥaddith, writes in *Ashī'at al-Lam'āt*, "Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ are the highest (in rank) and most superior to all. They were the foremost in respect of all religious and worldly matters. Both of them are the viziers and the confidants of the Messenger of Allāh ؐ."¹⁰²

It is in *al-Ṣawā'iq*, "Then it is necessary to believe and acknowledge that the most honourable and supreme from the entire creation in the Sight of Allāh after the Prophets and Messengers, and the most worthy of the Prophetic Caliphate, was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ. We know after the demise of the Prophet of Allāh ؐ there was no one on the face of the earth who had this attribute besides him. Then after him, it was Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ..."¹⁰³

If you prefer, read *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, "The meaning of *Afḍaliyyah* which we have proven, is an abundance of reward and honour in the Sight of Allāh (*karāmah 'ind Allāh*)."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *Sharḥ al-Maqāsīd*, Al-Faṣl al-Rābi', vol. 3, p. 523.

¹⁰¹ *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, Hadīth #4985, vol. 4, p. 251.

¹⁰² *Ashī'at al-Lam'āt*, Kitāb al-Fitan, vol. 4, p. 650.

¹⁰³ *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥriqah*, Bāb Khātamah Fī al-Umur al-Muḥimmah, p. 248.

¹⁰⁴ *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, al-Marsad al-Rābi'

The upshot of everything is that when a slave implements the teachings and the injunctions of Allāh and avoids His prohibitions, then the Ever-Merciful out of His Grace, blesses the slave with His closeness and honours him by granting him an increase of His Bounty; further bestowing him with the delights of Paradise.

Allāh says, "And this is the Paradise which is bequeathed to you, because of your deeds." (43:72)

He says, "And prostrate, and become close to Us." (96:19)

In a Hadīth Qudsī, Allāh states, "...and My slave continuously draws closer to Me by performing *Nawāfil* (supererogatory deeds) until I love him..."¹⁰⁵

The Prophet of Allāh ؐ has said, "The servant is nearest to his Lord when he is in prostration."¹⁰⁶

In another narration, "You should stand in prayer during the night, for it is the way of the righteous people who came before you, and it will bring you closer to your Lord, expiate for sins, prevent sin, and expel diseases from the body."¹⁰⁷

The Prophet of Allāh ؐ has said, "Through prayer, a righteous person obtains closeness to Allāh."¹⁰⁸

Imām al-Munāwī writes under the commentary of the above Hadīth, "The righteous people gain closeness to Allāh, by seeking His closeness through the prayers."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Riqāq, Hadīth #6502, vol. 4, p. 248.

¹⁰⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, Hadīth #215, p. 250.

¹⁰⁷ *Ḍunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Da'wāt, Hadīth #3560, vol. 5, p. 322.

¹⁰⁸ *Baḥr al-Fawā'id*, p. 159

¹⁰⁹ *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, Hadīth #5182, vol. 4, p. 325.

In another Hadith, "Seek the Divine Closeness by malice towards the sinful (i.e. the act), and meet them with frowns upon your faces, and seek the Pleasure of Allāh by being displeased with them, and seek His closeness by distancing yourself away from them."¹¹⁰

Such verses of the Holy Qur'ān and Prophetic sayings make it clear that virtuous deeds not only provide a place in Paradise but are also a means of obtaining closeness to Allāh. The verse, '*Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is the one who is the most pious among you*' (49:13), is a sufficient proof that good deeds lead to honour in the presence of Allāh, and *thawāb* is the secondary reward of those virtuous deeds. To limit the reward by defining it as the bounties and pleasures of Paradise is incorrect.

Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī writes, "To limit 'reward' to the pleasures and delights of Paradise only, is incorrect as the ultimate happiness (in Paradise) is in the remembrance of Allāh, expressing gratitude on His bounties, His proximity and His gnosis, the apex of which is seeing Him, compared to which all other delights and pleasures will be immaterial and insignificant."¹¹¹

An increase in Divine Closeness and an increase in heavenly delights are not equal. If Zayd was rewarded by being given the heavenly delights and 'Amr by being granted closeness to Allāh, then ask yourself who has been given a greater reward?

¹¹⁰ Jam' al-Jawāmi', Qism al-Aqwāl, Hadith #10528, vol. 4, p. 102.

¹¹¹ Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar, p. 132.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that after the Prophets and Messengers, no one can be equal to the closeness, honour, status, respect and proximity to Allāh that the Four Caliphs possess; irrespective of his level of knowledge, deeds, sainthood or whether he is from the Prophetic Family or from the Companions. Moreover, the *Shaykhayn* have precedence over the *Khatunayn* (sons-in-law; Sayyidunā 'Uthmān and Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام) without in any way demeaning the honour of the latter two, Allāh forbid.

The belief of the Taḥḍīliyyah is to the contrary; giving Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام superiority.

By the grace of Allāh, this concrete work and wise approach - in which the doubt of the doubters will have no room for persistence - is only a drop from the vast ocean of knowledge of the scholars. But perhaps, such an explanation, clarification and work may not be found elsewhere, '*This is a grace of Allāh upon us and upon mankind, but most men are not thankful*' (12:38).

O person! Hold to it tightly as it is very beneficial. There is no might and power except by Allāh the All-Powerful.

Part A9: The Two Methods by which Superiority is Established

There are two ways by which someone's superiority may be proven:

1. From the absolutely clear statements of the narrational sources (*nusūs shar'iyyah*) - that mention superiority referenced to a particular individual. This is the soundest way and no one has a right to oppose the *nusūs shar'iyyah*.
2. By reasoning and deduction.

Both ways prove the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*.

With regards to the second way, the foundations of determining precedence and superiority are of two bases:

1. *Mā Fihī al-Taḥāḍul* - is that in which there is relative superiority i.e. that both the superior and the superseded both possess the attribute but one (the superior) exceeds the other (the superseded) in regards to it.
2. *Mā Bihī al-Aḥdaliyyah* - is that by which superiority is established in *Mā Fihī al-Taḥāḍul*. This is exclusive to the superior and the superseded does not have any share of this whatsoever.

Take the example of a sharp knife and a blunt knife, the *Mā Fihī al-Taḥāḍul* is the quality of 'cutting' - the sharp knife cuts very well (thus superior) while the blunt knife does not cut as well (thus being superseded). The *Mā Bihī al-Aḥdaliyyah* is the sharpness and the blunt knife has no part of this.

Both the *Ahl al-Sunnah* and the *Taḥḍīliyyah* gave precedence to one person over the other. The different conclusion stems from

the *Taḥḍīliyyah*'s disregard for the Verses and the Ahādith (*nusūs shar'iyyah*), while the *Ahl al-Sunnah* refer to the Qur'ānic Verses, Ahādith and the Scholarly verdicts - and this is where the split originates from.

When we look into these *nusūs shar'i*, we find the verse of the Holy Qur'ān, "Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is one who is **the most pious among you**" (49:13): this is decisive text that gives us the determining factor - Taqwā (piety), and this has also been highlighted in many Ahādith. Being the **most pious** is the *Mā Bihī al-Aḥdaliyyah*. The superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is established by them being the most pious, the criterion laid out in the *nusus shara'i*.

In contrast the *Taḥḍīliyyah* in following their whims consider at times exclusivity to certain specific qualities as the bedrock for establishing *faḍl kullī* (absolute precedence) while at other times consider fame and the abundance of excellences, nobility of lineage and eminence of pedigree; eminence of the person the individual married; the individual being the founder of spiritual chains etc as the key determinant factor for establishing *faḍl kullī*.

However, by the grace of Allāh, we have refuted such notions in the previous parts.¹¹²

If we ponder deeply, then the origin of all of these different factors is really one thing, the degree perfection of the strength of one's Imān (*kamāl quwwat-e-Imān*). This attribute is hidden and its beauty is placed in a believer's heart.

¹¹² These things may be deemed as 'partial excellences' but cannot determine the 'Absolute Excellence' (or 'Absolute Superiority').

It is only by this that a human being obtains closeness to Allāh. This is a means of distinction in terms of honour, nobility and respect. Thus, when the intensity of this attribute (*īmān*) increases, it also increases piety - the ability to do good and the strength to abstain from evil. This is the essence of piety.

By virtue of this strength, a person will surpass others in good deeds, and when he surpasses all in good deeds, then surely he will be regarded as the one who gave the most benefit to Islām, and thus such an individual is decreed to be the closest Companion of the Prophet of Islām ﷺ. All the other factors are inter-connected and they all stem from and return to this source - the strength of *īmān*. Nothing else can be the determinant factor.

The different factors mentioned in the Ahādith in order to differentiate superiority and the manner in which they all revolve around this unique factor are mentioned in Part C, by the Will of Allāh.

Part A10: Dispelling the Remaining Doubts Raised by the *Sanfaḍḍiyyah*

In this part, the great *Imām* provides five admonitions against the *Sanfaḍḍiyyah*'s deliberate muddling of the definition of *Aḡḍaliyyah*.

Admonition 1

[Against the claim that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* exists only by virtue of the benefit they gave to the Muslims and Islām and/or by the spread of Islām in their respective reigns.]

The disagreement is not regarding specific individual (*juẓʾī*) virtues and excellences. This is because, in this aspect, the Ahl al-Sunnah also believe there are some specific individual excellences of the *Shaykhayn* which would give them superiority over Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ and vice versa. Furthermore, other Companions also had certain, individual excellences that would, by this yardstick, make them superior to all of the Four Caliphs. These specific individual excellences will result in 'Conditional Superiority' (*bi al-Taḡyīd*, mentioned in A8 above).

However, the point of discussion is in relation to the unconditional absolute superiority (*Kullī*). When reference is made to the most excellent without specifying or qualifying with reference to a particular attribute or excellence, then undoubtedly, it is the blessed *Shaykhayn*, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ, who are *aḡḍal*.

Admonition 2

The bewildering state of affairs of the *Sanʿadiddiyah* is such that their hearts are not open to accept nor softened by the Verses, Ahadith and the *Ijmāʾ* of the scholars, "...and whomever He wills to send astray, He makes his breast narrow and constricted as if he were engaged in ascent to the heavens." (6:125).

The name 'Sunnī is so dear to them that they do not desire to publicly disavow it! And yet behind closed doors, they begin to interpret the matter at hand with statements from their own whims, and then claim such interpretations to be of Sunnī origin. However, by the grace of Allāh, by the might and power given to the scholars, truth and falsehood have been distinguished¹¹³.

¹¹³ The Imām then refutes those who believe the *Shaykhayn* to be the most superior regarding Caliphate and Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام) to be most superior with respect to Sainthood. They argue that as the *Shaykhayn* were the first to be given caliphate and Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام) succeeded them, they are superior in this regard; however, because in the spiritual dominion, all the spiritual chains stem from Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام) and not the *Shaykhayn*, therefore, he (Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام)) is most superior.

The Imām says that the above claim is baseless. If it was the case then why is it that in every Friday sermon (*khutbah*) the words, "The best human after the Prophets, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq (عليه السلام)" are expressed, and why is it that the Ahadith declare the the *Shaykhayn* to be, after the Prophets and the Messengers, the leaders of the first and last and the best from those of the heavens and earth? Why is it that Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام) himself expressed his view using the words, "If the Prophet (ﷺ) chose them for our religious affairs (i.e. *Ṣalāh*) then why shouldn't we choose them for our worldly affairs (i.e. Caliphate)?" [*Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, Imām al-Suyūṭī, P. 6]

Objections of the Detractors & their Replies

Objection 1

The order of superiority in the school of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that the best from the entire creation is our Master Sayyidunā Muḥammad (ﷺ), then the other Prophets, then the Angels of close proximity then the *Shaykhayn* (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq and Sayyidunā 'Umar (عليه السلام)) then the *Khatatayn* (the two sons-in-law, Sayyidunā 'Uthmān and Sayyidunā 'Alī (عليه السلام)) then the rest of the Companions.

The aforementioned hierarchy of superiority must be and is determined by reference to one distinguishing factor and not two (or more).

For example, in terms of brightness we say that the *brightest* is the Sun, then the Moon, then the stars and then the candle; and in terms of the ability to cut, we say that the *sharpest* is the sword, then the knife and then the dagger and so forth. If someone was to say, "The best is the Sun, then the Moon then the dagger" or "The best is the sword, then the knife then the candle" then he has conflated two distinguishing factors into one (which would be incorrect).

Now it is asked: When we say that the Beloved of Allāh (ﷺ) is the best of all creation, then does this have another meaning other than believing that the closeness to Allāh, status, honour and virtue of the Prophet of Allāh (ﷺ) is greater than that of any other? The same is the situation with the other Prophets in distinction to the Angels, and the Angels in distinction to the Companions. In the same way when we say the Prophets excel even the Angels of the close proximity and the Angels of close

proximity excel the Companions, we do not stray from the above reasoning why they do so. Thus, when we say the *Shaykhayn* are superior to Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام, this must be the import of the very same meaning; otherwise, the methodology would be corrupted and the order spoiled.

If they consider the 'distinguishing factor of superiority' to be the amount of rewards and other 'innovated' factors, then as mentioned earlier in the book, we have to consider the same factor of superiority for the entire hierarchy. However, using the "amount of rewards" as the distinguishing factor would be fallacious as the Angels do not receive reward per se (so the amount of reward cannot be the distinguishing factor). Nor can we say that the Angels of the Divine Throne are superior to others because of the benefit they give to Islām (thus negating the factor to be the amount of benefit conferred to Islām and the Muslims). And the factor of 'Caliphate' cannot at all be used for those above and below the Four Blessed Caliphs عليهم السلام then how can these 'innovated' factors be acceptable?

It is astonishing that they begin by using "the Closeness to Allāh" as the determinant factor and also employ this to those under Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام; yet, when it comes to the *Shaykhayn* they change the factor of superiority to be something other than this, overlooking what comes before and after!

If this was the creed of the Ahl al-Sunnah (that Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام is more superior to the *Shaykhayn*), then why has no single Sunnī scholar established the above hierarchy such that the most superior after the Beloved Messenger are the Prophets and Messenger, then Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام and then the *Shaykhayn*?! They (the detractors) have never read the books of Ahādīth and therefore begin to interpret the issue on a fictional basis. If they

have not read any Ahādīth then let them be patient, as we will mention to them many Ahādīth, statements of the Companions, Tabi'īn, and even the statements of the Imāms of the Prophetic Family, and let them read these impartially and judge their own interpretations in light of these statements.

Let us consider just one Ḥadīth for now: "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of all those who came before and those who are to come after (*al-Awwalīn wa al-Ākhirīn*), and they are the best of all the dwellers of the heavens and earth save the Prophets and Messengers."¹¹⁴

Objection 2

The Ahl al-Sunnah say, "The best Companion is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar, then Sayyidunā 'Uthmān, then Sayyidunā 'Alī, then the rest of the Blessed-Ten"¹¹⁵ and then the rest of the Companions."

To those who say this hierarchy of superiority is only based by reference to the factor of Caliphate, we ask "Were any of the remaining Blessed-Ten and other Companions Caliphs?" How will we judge their superiority?

¹¹⁴ *Jam' al-Jawānī*, Harf al-Hamzah, Ḥadīth #124, vol.1, p. 39.

¹¹⁵ (Including the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs and) Sayyidunā Talha, Sayyidunā al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām, Sayyidunā 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Awf, Sayyidunā Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, Sayyidunā Sa'īd ibn Zayd, Sayyidunā Abū 'Ubayyah ibn al-Jarrāh عليهم السلام. [*Abū Dawūd* and *al-Tirmidhī*]

Objection 3

The *Sanfaddiyyah* argue that the Ahl al-Sunnah refer to the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* in one aspect and in another aspect give superiority to Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام. If this is the case then why have the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah always taken only one aspect into consideration?

You may have read and heard innumerable times, "The best from mankind after the Prophets عليهم السلام is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar, then Sayyidunā 'Uthmān and then Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام" but you will never find, not even in a handful of books, that the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah took any other aspect than closeness to Allāh into consideration and said, "The best from mankind after the Prophets is Sayyidunā 'Alī, then Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar عليه السلام."

How is it possible that the scholars have totally overlooked the other aspect and have always referred to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام as the best of all the Companions, rather the best of the entire creation after the Prophets and Messengers?

If Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام was closer to Allāh than the *Shaykhayn*, then surely the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah should (and would) have given us the hierarchy of superiority in accordance with this.

Objection 4

The Prophet ﷺ, Sayyidunā 'Alī, the Ahl al-Bayt and other Companions عليهم السلام have explicitly mentioned the absolute superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. But why do the opponents not say it explicitly that the best from all Companions are the *Shaykhayn*. However, whenever they make such statements,

they do so by adding certain conditions and restrictions (For example, "*The Shaykhayn* are superior because they have conquered many cities"). Their attaching these conditions is concrete proof that their beliefs are not in conformity with those that have been laid out in the Holy Qur'ān, Aḥadīth and the Consensus (*ijmā'*); otherwise, like the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, his blessed family and Companions, who mentioned their absolute superiority without any restrictions, would have done the same.¹¹⁶

We ask them "Who is the best?" They will answer saying, "All Companions are excellent." No one denies this. But if it means that they are all equal then this statement contradicts their own stance and beliefs. They are from neither this side nor that! The Ahl al-Sunnah will say that they have gone against the Holy Qur'ān, Aḥadīth and the Consensus (*ijmā'*). The *Tafḥiilyah* will also disavow themselves from them (the *Sanfaddiyyah*).

And if their statement means that "He is excellent and so is he and only Allāh knows who is superior from among them", then by the grace of Allāh they have proven their ignorance in this matter. If this is the case then the cure for their ignorance is quite easy, "*So O people! Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.*" (16:43). But instead they become provocative and begin to reject the statements of the 'People of Knowledge'. *SubhānAllāh!* If they do not know who is superior then why do they argue with those who do know?

¹¹⁶ i.e. state their superiority with reference to certain conditions and certain aspects.

Some of the *Sanfaddiyyah* say, "These are not our own words¹¹⁷ but rather statements of our predecessors." made such claims in absolute private gatherings. Are they so audacious to lay such accusations on the great predecessors and the pre-eminent *Awliyā'* who were luminaries of the Ahl al-Sunnah? Our great predecessors are those whose light of virtue and knowledge until this day kindles and grants guidance to the entire Ummah. Such is their inspiration that merely kissing the dust of the entrance gate of their abodes would instantly make one a true adherent of the Ahl al-Sunnah. As far fetched as it is, let us assume for nothing more than argument's sake, that the great predecessors did make such statements and were not made aware of the most superior, then it should be known that one must follow knowledge not ignorance. There are many who do know! Look at the above Qur'ānic verse that orders us to ask those who know. It does not say, 'If any of your predecessors do not know then you should also follow them (in ignorance) and there is no need to seek knowledge'.

Now, if according to the statement of the *Sanfaddiyyah*, the predecessors were unaware of it then it becomes incumbent upon them to ask those who are aware. From those who had knowledge and who explicitly mentioned the unconditional superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام. Yet, they still find cause to disagree?

If they say that the *Shaykhayn* and Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام are equally 'absolutely superior' then this is an absolute contradiction. You can only believe one to be superior to the other. If they believe this to be the *Shaykhayn* then they have agreed upon our belief. Then why do they argue with the Ahl al-Sunnah and seek to

¹¹⁷ i.e. the statement "that Allāh knows who is superior and we should not indulge in such things"

tarnish our beliefs? We have asserted many times that both tarnish our excellences, such that they cannot be found in others, have great excellences, such that they cannot be found in others, however, 'Absolute Superiority' lies with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام. If the *Sanfaddiyyah* say that 'absolute superiority' is with Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام then they have unmasked their own reality that they are not from the Ahl al-Sunnah.

Then why don't they clearly state that the *Shaykhayn* have many excellences but the 'Absolute-superiority' lies with Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام? We will then unsheathe swords of solid proofs and evidences to which sound minds are obliged to bow their heads in submission and to accept. Yes! This will happen, but first we demand them to bring forth their evidences and ask (firstly) what is the distinguishing factor on which they base their opinion? (Secondly) they will have to prove that those who possess such a quality will indeed be the closest to Allāh and (thirdly) that the excellences of the *Shaykhayn* cannot interfere with the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام.

Perhaps all the above discussions which have been made by this weak beggar (Imām Ahmad Ridā) are unprecedented and unfound elsewhere. And all praise belongs to Allāh.

Admonition 3

Some think that when the Ahl al-Sunnah refer to the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* in terms of their closeness to Allāh then this superiority is in all aspect (*min kullī al-wujūh*). However, this statement has already been explicitly rebutted above. Their misunderstanding is from failing to perceive the difference in the meaning of 'absolute (*mufīḍ*) superiority' and 'superiority in all aspects (*min jamī'i al-wujūh*).'

Admonition 4

Some think that by ascribing superiority to the *Shaykhayn* over Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام debases the rank of the latter - Allāh forbid! This is their misunderstanding and it is to slander the Muslims without reason.

My friend! We have been commanded to recognise the status of those who are virtuous and treat them according to their respective statuses. We consider the status of Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام, after all the Prophets, Messengers and the first three Caliphs, to be most superior to the rest of the Ahl al-Bayt, Companions, Angels, mankind and Jinn. This is because this is how it is in the sight of Allāh. This is not disrespect. Disrespect would arise if we ascribed superiority to anyone else over Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام other than the first three Caliphs عليهم السلام in the same way they belittle the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* over Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام.

If disrespect is regarded as consequential when ascribing superiority to one over another whose virtues and merits are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān or the Ahādīth, then what about those who consider the status of the other Prophets to be lower than our Prophet ﷺ? Their virtues and excellences have also been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth. If, despite the mention of the virtues and excellences of the other Prophets in the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth, we consider their ranks to be lower than that of our Beloved Prophet ﷺ, then does not this entail disrespect of the other Prophets? Yet, it is unequivocal that disrespect of any Prophet is undoubtedly blasphemy (*Kufr*)!

My friend! That is why our luminaries state that the rank of the *Shaykhayn* is superior to that of the *Khatanayn*, without in any way demeaning or denigrating the rank of the latter.

Admonition 5

Some of the *Sanjadīyah* contend that each of the Four Caliphs are superior and that to distinguish between them is none of their concern; how can our shallow intellects come to know their individual ranks?

The reply to this is that we have no choice but to follow the verdicts of the Great Imāms who stipulated that the *Shaykhayn* are the most superior. If someone was to argue that - Allāh forbid! - The great Imāms were unaware of their ranks, then have the Imāms given verdicts without any knowledge or basis? The excellences and superiority of the *Shaykhayn* have been mentioned by Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام himself through multi-chain narrations (*Tawātur*); was he also unaware of the relative ranks?

We ask these individuals whether or not they believe our Prophet ﷺ to be the leader of all Prophets? If not, then let them ask the scholars for the verdict. How is it that they are unable to perceive the status of the Four Caliphs but acknowledge the status of the Ahl al-Bayt without any hesitation? They will answer by saying that they have not come to understand the status of the Ahl al-Bayt of their own accord, but rather this has been prescribed in the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādīth. Now we come to an agreement. Who is asking to use his rationale to understand the statuses of the Four Caliphs عليهم السلام? Just read and understand the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth!

Part B: Textual Proofs establishing the Superiority of the *Shaykhayn*

After defining the meaning of superiority, Imām Aḥmad Ridā رحمته اللہ علیہ proves the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* from textual proofs of the Qur’ān and Sunnah (*naṣūṣ*) and the Consensus (*ijmā’*) of the scholars. He divided this part into several sections. However the exact number of sections is unknown. Only three sections of the original manuscript have been found:

Section 1 on al-*Ijmā’* (Scholarly Consensus)

Section 2 on the Verses of the Holy Qur’ān

Section 3 on the Aḥādīth

A summary of each section is as follows:



Section B1: Scholarly Consensus (*al-Ijmāʿ*)

In this section Imām Aḥmad Riḍā rah proves that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* above all the Companions is a consensual issue.¹¹⁸

Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh Ibn ‘Umar rah says, “During the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, we (the Companions) never regarded anyone equal to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, then Sayyidunā ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān rah.”¹¹⁹

Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah rah states, “We (the Companions) used to say many times, ‘The best of this Community after the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar rah.’”¹²⁰

Imām Maymūn Ibn Mahrān was once asked, ‘Who is superior, the *Shaykhayn* or ‘Alī rah? On the very hearing of this question his body shook so violently, that the staff he was holding fell out of his hands on to the ground and he then said, “I never thought that I would live to see the day when people shall consider someone equal to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā ‘Umar rah.’”¹²¹

It is apparent from these narrations that the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was a matter on which consensus existed during the time of the Companions and the Tābiʿīn; that their ears were unresponsive to anyone who believed otherwise, and that their bodies would tremble by the mere questioning of this.

Imām al-Shāfiʿī and other great Imāms have also mentioned the consensus of the Companions and the Tābiʿīn.

Similarly the existence of consensus in this matter has been explicitly mentioned in the general books of *Uṣūl* and has been included in the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah without any disagreement.

Imām Abū Zakariyyā al-Nawawī rah cites in the commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “The Ahl al-Sunnah have all unanimously agreed on the fact that the best (of all Companions) is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar rah.”¹²²

He further writes in his *Tahdhīb al-Asmāʾ wa al-Lughāt*, “The Ahl al-Sunnah have all agreed that the absolute superior (*Afḍaluhum ‘alā al-ʿIṭlāq*) is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar rah.”¹²³

Imām Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭalānī writes in his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, “The best human after the Prophets is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq rah. The predecessors (*Salaf*) have all agreed upon him being the best of this Ummah. Imām Shāfiʿī and others have mentioned the unanimity of the Companions and the Tābiʿīn on this issue.”¹²⁴

He further writes in his *al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyyah wa al-Minah al-Muḥammadiyyah*, “The most superior according to the Ahl al-Sunnah consensually is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā ‘Umar rah.”¹²⁵

¹¹⁸ A matter upon which consensus (of the righteous scholars) exists.

¹¹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Faḍāʾil al-Ashāb, Hādith #3655.

¹²⁰ *Sunan Abū Dāʾūd*, Kitāb al-Sunnah #4628

¹²¹ *Tarīkh al-Khulafāʾ* (Imām al-Suyūṭī), p.26.

¹²² *Sharḥ al-Nawawī*, Kitāb Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah, vol. 15, p. 148.

¹²³ *Ibid*.

¹²⁴ *Irshād al-Sārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Faḍl Abī Bakr Baʿd al-Nabiyy ﷺ, Hādith #3655, vol. 6, p. 430.

¹²⁵ *Al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyyah*, al-Maqṣad al-Sābiʿ, vol. 2, p. 545.

'Allāmah Fāsi in the commentary of *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* says, "There is consensus (*ijmā'*) on the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ over all other Companions."¹²⁶

It is mentioned in *Bustān (al-'Ārifīn)* of Faḡīh Abū al-Layth, "Muḥammad Ibn al-Faḡl says, 'They (the scholars) have agreed upon the fact that the best of this Ummah after the Prophet ؐ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ.'"¹²⁷

Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī al-Haytamī writes in *al-Zawājir*, "The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah have unanimously agreed upon the superiority of the ten blessed Companions who were given glad tidings of *Jannah* by the Prophet of Allāh ؐ, and the best from among them is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr then Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ." ¹²⁸

It is in *Kifāyat al-'Awām (fi mā yajib alayhim min al-Kalām)* of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Fuḡḡālī al-Azharī, "It is necessary to believe that the best time (*Qarn*) was the time of the Companions then the time of the Tābi'in and also (it is necessary to believe) that the best of all the Companions was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā 'Umar, then Sayyidunā 'Uthmān then Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ in this order."¹²⁹

'Allāmah Bājūrī writes in his commentary of *Kifāyat al-'Awām* entitled, '*Tahqīq al-Maqām*', "The statement 'the best of all the Companions was Sayyidunā Abū Bakr' is the opinion agreed-upon by the Ahl al-Sunnah."¹³⁰

Sayyidī al-Shaykh al-'Allāmah 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlawī, may Allāh sanctify his secret, writes in *Takmil al-Īmān*, "The unanimous position of the Imāms is that this a matter on which consensus exists."¹³¹

It is cited in *Qasīdah Bad' al-Amālī* of Shaykh 'Alī ibn 'Uthmān al-Farḡānī al-Ḥanafī, "Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ has explicit superiority over all Companions without a shadow of doubt."¹³²

After mentioning many more textual evidences on the consensus, Imām Aḥmad Ridā ؓ writes, "I am astounded by that individual who goes against the consensus of the Companions, the Tabi'in and all the Ahl al-Sunnah, yet he still regards himself a Sunnī! My friend! Believing in all the fundamental beliefs will make one a Muslim, and disregarding any one of them will make a person a disbeliever, similarly believing all the fundamental teachings of the Ahl al-Sunnah will make a person Sunnī and disregarding any one of them will make him not a Sunnī but an innovator."

Shaykh 'Abū Shakūr al-Sālimī writes, "Some of their (*Taqfīlīs*) statements are innovative (*Biḏ'ah*), not infidelity (*Kufr*). From those statements is their statement that Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ is superior to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, Sayyidunā 'Umar and Sayyidunā 'Uthmān ؓ." ¹³³

It is in *'Aqā'id al-Bazdawī*, "From the Rāfiḡīs, the least extreme are the Zaydiyyah. Though they do not accuse the Companions of disbelief and believe that the *Shaykhayn* were the true Imāms

¹²⁶ *Maḡālī' al-Masarrāt*, p. 147.

¹²⁷ *Bustān al-'Ārifīn*, Chapter 126, p. 129.

¹²⁸ *Al-Zawājir 'an Iqtirāf al-Kabā'ir*, vol. 3, p. 334.

¹²⁹ *Kifāyat al-'Awām*, p. 185.

¹³⁰ *Tahqīq al-Maqām Sharḥ Kifāyat al-'Awām*, p. 185.

¹³¹ *Takmil al-Īmān*, Bāb Faḡl al-Ṣaḡābah, p. 135.

¹³² *Qasīdah Bad' al-Amālī*, verse #34, p. 9.

¹³³ *Tamhīd-e-Abū Shakūr Sālimī* (Urdu), p. 393.

but they hold the belief that Sayyidunā 'Alī is superior to the *Shaykhayn*."

It is in *Chunyat al-Tālibīn*, known to be written by Sayyidunā al-Chawth al-A'zam Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī ؑ, "(From the beliefs of the Rawāfiḍ is) regarding Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ to be the most superior of all the Companions."¹³⁴

It is in the commentary of *Qasīdah Bad'u al-Amālī*, "The faith of those who deny the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* is in danger."¹³⁵

Imām Abū 'Abd-Allāh al-Dhababī, after mentioning the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* writes, "May Allāh disgrace them! How ignorant they are!"¹³⁶

It is in *Khulāṣat al-Fatāwā*, "Those Rāfiḍīs who give superiority to Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ to others (i.e. the *Shaykhayn*) are innovators."¹³⁷

It is in *Fatḥ al-Qadir*, "Those Rāfiḍīs who give superiority to Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ over the first three Caliphs are innovators."¹³⁸ This has also been mentioned in *al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*¹³⁹ and in *Majma' al-Anhur*¹⁴⁰.

It is written in *Sharḥ al-Nuqāyah*, "The *Imāmah* (leading the congregational prayer) of those who give superiority to

Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ to the *Shaykhayn* is abominably disliked (*makrūh*)."¹⁴¹

'Allāmah Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī states, "He who just believes in the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ (and does not disparage the superiority of the innovators)."¹⁴²

Shaykhayn) is from the innovators."¹⁴³ 'Allāmah 'Abd al-'Alī al-Lakhnawī writes in *Rasā'il al-Arkān*, "As regards to those Shī'as who give preference to Sayyidunā 'Alī over the *Shaykhayn* but do not disparage them, like the *Zaydiyyah*, then although to pray behind them is permissible, it is severely disliked (*Karāḥah Shadīdah*)."¹⁴⁴

Sayyid Ibn 'Abidin al-Shāmī writes in *Radd al-Muḥtār*, "If they (Rawāfiḍ) believe Sayyidunā 'Alī to be superior to the *Shaykhayn* or they disparage the Companions then they are innovators not disbelievers."¹⁴⁵

¹³⁴ *Chunyat al-Tālibīn*, Faṣl Fī al-Rāfiḍīyah, vol. 1, p. 180.
¹³⁵ *Sharḥ Qasīdah Bad' al-Amālī* under verse #34.

¹³⁶ *Al-Sawā'iq al-Muhriqah*, pp. 90-91.

¹³⁷ *Khulāṣat al-Fatāwā*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 149.

¹³⁸ *Fatḥ al-Qadir*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 304.

¹³⁹ *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 611.

¹⁴⁰ *Majma' al-Anhur Sharḥ Multaqā al-Abḥur*, Kitāb al-Ṣalāh, vol. 1, p. 163.

¹⁴¹ *Jamī' al-Rumūz* (Imām al-Qahastānī), vol. 1, p. 172.
¹⁴² *Chunyat al-Mustanlī*, p. 443.

¹⁴³ And thus, such a prayer has to be repeated.

¹⁴⁴ *Rasā'il al-Arkān*, al-Risālah al-Ulā fī al-Ṣalāh, p. 99.

¹⁴⁵ *Radd al-Muḥtār*, Kitāb al-Nikāḥ, vol. 3, p. 46.

Question:

Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, the author of *al-Istī'āb*, wrote that there were a small number of Companions who regarded Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام as the most superior.

Answer:

"Surely we are from Allāh and surely we have to return to Him. What is the state of a man who hastily accepts the most hidden, weak and far-fetched statement only because it is more supportive of his stance, while not accepting the most apparent and the most robust, strong, unequivocal and evident statements only because it contradicts his stance!"

Reasons why this Claim is Baseless:

Reason 1: At the end of the day we have to realise the fact that there are thousands of great Imāms and Muḥadithin who came long before the time of Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. A significant amount of religious knowledge and narrations have been passed down by and transmitted from these earlier scholars, from which Ibn 'Abd al-Barr also benefited.

There are two possibilities:

1. The narration which reached Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, relating that a few number of Companions believed Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام as superior of all the Companions, was indeed known to the earlier scholars, yet somehow they all colluded in hiding it - Allāh forbid!

If this notion is accepted, then we are faced with a great difficulty as such a claim entails doubting one's faith! Have you not realised that the whole religion, including the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahādith were passed down through the earlier scholars? If we believe that they all colluded in hiding one narration then this would mean that security and validity (amān) has been removed from our religion. How would we be sure that many verses of the Holy Qur'ān and Ahādith have not been hidden in the same way? And this is the religion of the Rāfidīs who believe that the Companions have manipulated and changed some of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān. We ask Allāh to safeguard us from such insinuations!

2. Let us assume that such a narration did indeed reach them. The luminary scholars scrutinised the narrations and agreed upon its fictitious nature; thus they disregarded it and did not believe it interfered with the earlier established consensus.

How can we take a single (Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's) statement on board by disregarding the statements of hundreds, nay, thousands of earlier scholars? This is one of the reasons why such statements are baseless.

Reason 2: Let us assume that the statement is indeed sound. There is a possibility that the earlier luminary scholars were alerted about such a narration but only after consensus had already been established. No doubt any contradictory statement after the establishment of a consensual opinion is invalid and unacceptable.

The other possibility is that this disagreement was before the consensual opinion was established but after their research the superiority of the *Shaykhayn* was made apparent to them, thus they returned (*rujiu*) to the consensus rendering a continuation of an opposing position redundant. Take for example, the companion Sayyidunā Abū Juhayfah Wahab al-Khayr ؓ who initially deemed Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ as the most superior until Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ himself inspired in him the truth and thereafter he affirmed the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*.

Reason 3: Let us believe that such a disagreement did exist from the very beginning. But such an unusual, rare (*nādir*), defective (*majrūh*) and weak (*ḍa'if*) disagreement does not affect the consensus.

By Allāh do justice! If we believe that any statements contradictory to the consensus can be accepted or rejected by anyone, then two-thirds of the Islāmic rulings would be

¹⁴⁶ i.e. to those few who had previously held the opposing position.

nullified. This is because you will find narrations, which form the basis of Islamic rulings, free from apparent contradictions by rare and weak statements, as being very few and far between.

Even in respect to many of the agreed upon pillars of our religion, which we believe as being integral to our faith, someone could easily find the most-rejected, defective, disagreeing statements to contradict any one of these. The books contain literally everything!

What can we do? There are individuals who want to dwell into such incorrect statements like Allāh says, "*As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they pursue the indistinct part, desiring to cause thereby sedition and seeking its (wrongful) interpretation.*" (3:7)

There is a difference of opinion as to the authenticity of the Ḥadīth, "For whomsoever I am master (*mawlā*), 'Alī is also his master". The majority of the scholars regard this to be an authentic narration whereas Imām Abū Dāwūd and Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzi possess a different opinion. So I ask, if someone does not regard the Ḥadīth as being authentic, would you excuse such a person for not deeming Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ as a master of the believers? Of course not. You would argue with such people and become enemies if they persisted. Then why do you not adopt the same approach with the narration contradicting the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*?

Reason 4: The narrations of some Companions, from whom Ibn 'Abd al-Barr quotes that apparently portray them as holding Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ as the most superior, are not clear with regards to whether the superiority mentioned in them signifies

an 'absolute' (*kullī*) superiority or a 'partial' (*juzʿī*) superiority and those narrations signify partial superiority.

Rebuttal 1: It is known that save for six or seven Companions, all of the other Companions agreed upon the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There are innumerable Ahādith in this regard, such that rationally, it is impossible for the Companions to have been uninformed of them. Going against the majority and the Ahādith is treacherous and to accuse a Companion of such treachery is to slander him.

Rebuttal 2: In the very narration cited by Abū 'Umar which apparently support the superiority of Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام, the body of the Ḥadīth ends with the words that those Companions would say, "Indeed Sayyidunā 'Alī عليه السلام was the first to accept Islām." This indicates the fact that the interpretation¹⁴⁷ of the scholars is supported by this Ḥadīth itself.

Rebuttal 3: We will, Allāh willing, prove in Part C that the Caliphate of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddīq عليه السلام was due to his absolute superiority. Sayyidunā 'Umar عليه السلام and other Companions proved his superiority, and the allegiance took place for this reason. It is also apparent that among these Companions were those from whom Ibn 'Abd al-Barr took the rare contradictory narration. If they were against the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام then surely being the blessed Companions, and not fearing the outcome, they would have made their stance clear. You must have heard the saying, "The one silent from telling the truth is a dumb Satan."¹⁴⁸ Allāh forbid! How can we slander the great Companions with such

accusation? No doubt, they also acknowledged the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr عليه السلام.

Rebuttal 4: One of the greatest evidences to prove our stance is the writings of Abū 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. Just as he has cited a peculiar and unprecedented narration on this subject matter, similarly he has also written contrary to the majority in regards to the superiority of the Companions over all the other followers. He writes that there are some pious predecessors who, with the exception of the Companions of Badr and Ḥudaybiyah, are superior to all the other Companions and then he attempts to prove this innovated belief using evidences which do not even correspond to his ideology nor bear any relevance to his argument!

The scholars have answered saying that those evidences do not contradict our stance. From those evidences is the narration, "A day shall come that the one practising (Islām) shall be rewarded the reward of fifty people,"¹⁴⁹ which we mentioned in Part A8 – The Two Groups in relation to the issue of Superiority.

The words of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr are deemed to be based on 'Partial Virtue', which protects him going against the consensus and the majority, making the doubters unable to use his words to prove their own stance - this is evident by the understanding of his words that there is a consensus upon the superiority of *Shaykhayn* (as mentioned in *al-Sawā'iq*); or secondly, his words are deemed to be in reference to 'Absolute Virtue', which means we have to believe that he was heedless of the meaning of *Absolute Virtue* as mentioned to us by the great scholars. In this instance, his statement will be merely baseless.

¹⁴⁷ That this superiority is *juzʿī* (with regards one aspect and not absolute)

¹⁴⁸ *Nūr al-Anwār*, Bāb al-Ijmāʿ, p. 231
Kashf al-Asrār ʿan Uṣūl Fakhr al-Islām – Bāb al-Ijmāʿ, vol. 3, p. 343

¹⁴⁹ *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhi*, Kitāb al-Tafsīr Min Sūrah al-Mā'idah, Ḥadīth #3069, vol. 5, p. 42.

stance and the stance of our teachers of the *Sharh* and *Tarīqah*, despite a few of the latter-date scholars opposing the position held by the Imām of the Ahl al-Sunnah Sayyidunā Abū al-Hasan al-Ash‘arī¹⁵³ by deeming it to be speculative. If Allāh permits, I shall dwell into this subject matter further at the end of this book.

Even if, for the sake of argument, the consensus is speculative, it is still useless to the *Taḥfīlīyyah* and *Sanfādīyyah*. We do not pronounce these deviant sects as being disbelievers but we do pronounce them as being innovators. The jurists have also pronounced that the denier of the Prophetic Ascension (*‘Mirāj*) to the heavens as being an innovator, notwithstanding only the journey up to Bayt al-Maqdis (*al-Isrā*) has been proven through definitive evidence.

‘Allāmah Ṭāhir (al-Fattānī al-Gujarātī) mentions that anyone opposing a single-chain narration (*khabar wahīd*) is an innovator, even though single-chain narrations do not establish definiteness.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, considering them as ‘innovators’ has been explicitly mentioned by the earliest scholars as mentioned previously.

My master, Shaykh Abū al-Husayn Ahmad-e-Nūrī ؒ elegantly says, “If the issue of Taḍlīl is decisive (*Qaṭ‘ī*) then it is regarded as compulsory (*Farḍ*), and if speculative (*Dhannī*) then it is regarded as necessary (*Wājib*), and to go against both is a grave

sin. Is it then permissible to omit a Wājib only because it is speculative?” Another riposte he gave was, “Though the Wājibāt may not actually be from the ‘Necessities’ (*ḍarūriyyāt*) of religion, will a person who omits a Wājib still not be penalised?”

Warning against the Innovators

My friend, fear Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ and have mercy upon your Imām. Do not tread a path different to the Muslims. Perhaps your ears have not yet heard of the severe punishments and warnings against those who go against the consensus and the majority, otherwise you would not have supported the innovators nor would you have carried such a great calamity on your head.

[Among the textual warnings against the Innovators are:]

Allāh says, “And whoever opposes the Noble Messenger after the right path has been made clear to him, and follows a way other than that of the Muslims, We shall leave him as he is, and put him in Hell; and what a wretched place to return!” (4:115)

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Allāh will never allow my Ummah to unite upon misguidance and incorrect beliefs. Allāh’s mercy, blessings and protection are with the largest group of Muslims. And he who deviates from this largest group of Muslims will be thrown into Hell.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī in *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, Imām Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā ibn Ayyūb, Imām Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Irāqī in *Sharḥ al-Tabsīr* wa’l *Tadhkīr*ah, Imām al-Sakhāwī in *Fath al-Mughīth*, Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Pīrḥāwī in *Marām al-Kalām*, al-Imām al-Rabbānī Shaykh Ahmad Farūq Sarhīndī “Mujaddid al-‘Alīyah” in his *Maktūbāt* have all cited that Imām Abū’l Hasan al-Ash‘arī held the position that the consensus (*ijmā*) is *qatī* (definitive).

¹⁵⁴ *Majma’ Biḥār al-Anwār* – Faṣl fī al-Ṣaḥābah – Vol. 5, p. 739

¹⁵⁵ *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Sahīḥayn*, Kitāb al-‘Ilm, Ḥadīth #399, vol. 1, p. 316.

In another narration, "He who deviates from the largest group of Muslims, even as much as a hand span, has himself cut off his connection with Islām."¹⁵⁶

"There are three types of people who will be disregarded on the Day of Judgement (i.e. will be summarily cast into Hellfire). (From among them is the) one who deviated from the group, disobeyed his leader and died in that state."¹⁵⁷

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "One prayer to another, one Friday prayer to another, one Ramadān to another obliterate the sins committed in between them." Then the Prophet ﷺ said, "Except for three types of people; a polytheist, someone who breaks his allegiance with the leader without any (valid) reason and someone who leaves the Sunnah." He ﷺ then said, "Leaving Sunnah means to leave the group."¹⁵⁸

The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The one who desires a place in the centre of Jannah must stick to the group since the devil is with a single person, and he is far from two people."¹⁵⁹

In another Hadīth, "Verily Satan is the wolf (enemy) of a man just as the wolf is (the enemy) of a flock. He seizes the lonely sheep; the one sheep going astray from the flock or the one away from the flock. So avoid the divergent paths (that are clearly detached from the Sunnah and the Majority); it is incumbent upon you to remain with the Majority."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. Hadīth #409, vol. 1, p. 319.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. Hadīth #419, vol. 1, p. 322.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. Hadīth #420, vol. 1, p. 322.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Hadīth #395, vol. 1, p. 314.

¹⁶⁰ *Musnad* - Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad al-Anṣār*, Hadīth #220990, vol. 8, p. 238.

The Ahādīth mentioned in this regard are many, and as you have read earlier, the scholars consider the Taḡlīyyah as 'innovators', so abstain from them. If you stay with them then you will be part of the calamity, "How base it is to be called a *sinner after being a Muslim*" (49:1); how evil is it to be called an 'innovator' after being a Muslim!

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The people of innovation are the worst of mankind (*Khalq*) and the beasts (*khalīqah*)."¹⁶¹ (i.e. the entire creation)

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The people of innovations are the dogs of the Hellfire."¹⁶²

The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "My nation is going to split into seventy-three sects, and all of them will be in the Hellfire except one. And that (saved) group is al-Jamā'ah (The majority)."¹⁶³

In another narration someone asked, "Who are they (the saved sect), O Messenger of Allāh?" He ﷺ replied, "They are those who follow my way and that of my Companions."¹⁶⁴

The Mercy of the Universe ﷺ has said, "My curse and the curse of Allāh is upon six types of people and the supplication of a Prophet is always heard. (From amongst the six) is the one who leaves the (way of the) Sunnah."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (al-Nasā'ī), Hadīth #3566, vol. 2, p. 313. Meaning of *khalq* and *khalīqah* have been taken from *Majma' Bihār al-Anwār* - Khā-lām-Qāf.

¹⁶² *Kanz al-'Ummā*, Hadīth #1090, vol. 1, p. 121.

¹⁶³ *Sunan Abū Dā'ūd*, Bāb Sharḥ al-Sunnah, Hadīth #3981, vol. 2, p. 196.

¹⁶⁴ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Imān, Hadīth #2650, vol. 4, p. 292.

¹⁶⁵ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Hadīth #2883, vol. 3, p. 127.

"Allāh has veiled repentance (*tawbah*) from the innovator until he denounces the innovation."¹⁶⁶ In other words, if he leaves this world in the state of innovation, then he will die without sincere repentance and thus, without forgiveness.

"Allāh does not accept a (good) deed of an innovator until he leaves the innovation."¹⁶⁷

"Allāh does not accept the prayers, fasts, alms, Hajj, 'Umrah, jihād, neither obligatory nor voluntary acts of worship of an innovator and he leaves the fold of Islām just as easily as a strand of hair is removed from dough."¹⁶⁸

In another narration, "When an innovator dies, Islām has triumphed and achieved victory."¹⁶⁹

These Ahadith are, by the Will of Allāh, *ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) or *ḥasan* (sound), except the first one whose chain is *da'īf* (weak).

[Then the Imām mentioned the rulings of those who regard Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ to be superior to the *Shaykhayn* (the *Tafāḍilyyah*) and of those who believe Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؑ to be superior in one aspect and Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ in other aspect (the *Sanfādīyyah*). He mentions that praying Ṣalāh behind them is severely disliked (*makrūh*).]

¹⁶⁶ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, Hadith #4202, vol. 3, p. 165.

¹⁶⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, al-Kitāb al-Awwal, Hadith #1099

¹⁶⁸ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, p. 38.

¹⁶⁹ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, al-Kitāb al-Awwal, Hadith #1100, vol. 1, p. 122.

Section B2: The Verses of the Holy Qur'ān

Proofs from the Holy Qur'ān on the excellence, high rank and overall superiority of the *Shaykhayn*.

Verse 1: Allāh says the most honoured in His Sight are the most pious:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ شُعْرًا وَفَرْثًا ۚ وَإِنَّا لَآرْكَبُكُم

عَنِ اللَّهِ أَتُفَكِّرُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

"...Indeed the most honourable among you, in the Sight of Allāh, is one who is the most pious." (49:13)

And in another verse Allāh has called Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؑ as the most pious and God-fearing:

وَسَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ لِيٍّ ۖ وَالَّذِي يُوْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِيٍّ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِيٍّ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ

وَسَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ لِيٍّ ۚ وَالَّذِي يُوْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِيٍّ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِيٍّ يَتَزَكَّىٰ ۚ

"He - the most pious - will be kept far away from it [Hell]. Who gives his wealth in order to be pure. And no one has done a favour to him, for which he should be compensated. He desires only to please his Lord, the Supreme. And indeed, soon he will be very pleased." (92:17-21)

So combining the meanings of both verses we learn that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؑ is the most honoured in the Sight of Allāh.

Point 1: Those scholars who used this verse to prove the superiority of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ have illustrated to us that the factor for determining a person's excellence and status is by reference to his piety and closeness to Allāh.

Point 2: This verse also denotes the exaltedness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr's (ﷺ) *Wilāyah* (sainthood) as the most honourable in the Sight of Allāh is the one whose *Wilāyah* is the greatest.

Point 3: The word *Atqā* (most pious) does not denote *Taqī* (pious) as some have assumed. See for example the *tafsīr* of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dihlawī¹⁷⁰ for a refutation of such an unjustifiable claim.

Verse 2: Allāh has praised those who excel in good deeds (*Sābiq bi'l-Khayrāt*):

فَمَنْ أَوْشَكَ الْكَيْسَ الَّذِينَ أَصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا فَمِنْهُمْ قَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ

وَمِنْهُمْ مُقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ يُذُنُ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ فَهُمْ أَلَمْ يَسْمَعُوا

"We then made *Our* chosen bondsmen the inheritors of the Book, so among them are those who wrongs themselves; and among them are those who traverse the middle ground; and among them are those who, by the command of Allāh, surpassed others in good deeds; this is the greatest favour." (35: 32)

And it is proven from numerous *Aḥādīth* and sayings of the Companions that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ was the one who surpassed all in good deeds. Therefore this also proves that he is amongst the most praiseworthy of this nation.

Sayyidunā 'Abd-Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ narrates, "I was in the Masjid (al-Nabawī) praying when the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ

¹⁷⁰ *Tafsīr Fath al-'Azīz*, under 49:13.

entered, accompanied by Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā Umar ﷺ. I was sat making supplications when the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, 'Ask and it will be given to you.' Then the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Whoever wants to read the Qur'ān as fresh (as when it was revealed), then let him read according to the recitation of Ibn Umm 'Abd'¹⁷¹."

Then I went to my house. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ came to my house to convey the glad tiding. Shortly after, came Sayyidunā Umar ﷺ as Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was leaving my house and found that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ had already conveyed the glad tiding before him. Sayyidunā Umar ﷺ said to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ, 'Indeed you always greatly excel in good deeds (*Innaka la-Sabbāq bi al-Khayr*)'.¹⁷²

In another narration Sayyidunā Umar ﷺ said, "O Anṣār (Helpers)! O community of Muslims! The most worthy of taking care of the affair of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ is 'the second of the two when they were in the cave' whose excelling in goodness is clearly manifest (*al-Sabbāq al-Mubīn*)'.¹⁷³

Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ says, "By Allāh! We did not seek to excel each other in doing good, except that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr had already excelled us in doing so."¹⁷⁴

The Prophet ﷺ narrates that Sayyidunā Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ said to him ﷺ, "I have not excelled in any good deed except that Abū Bakr ﷺ excelled in it before me."¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ

¹⁷² *Musnad Abū Ya'la*, Ḥādīth #16 and #17, vol. 1, p. 29

¹⁷³ *Ṣohīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, Ḥādīth #415, vol. 1, p. 321.

¹⁷⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Ḥādīth #7168, vol. 5, p. 231

¹⁷⁵ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Faḍā'il, Ḥādīth #35616, vol. 12, p. 223.

How lofty it is that the Sublime Prophet ﷺ himself is narrating from Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ that 'our Abū Bakr is the one who excels all in good!'

Verse 3: In another verse Allāh praises Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ using the words, *Ulu al-Faḍli minkum* (the most superior of all of you):

وَمَا يَأْتِي أَوْلَى الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالشَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتَى أَوْلَى الْقُرْبَى وَالْأَسْكِنِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ مَا لَمْ يُخْفَى أَنْ يُغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

"And let not those who possess superiority among you and possess capacity, swear not to give to the relatives and the needy, and those who emigrate in Allāh's cause; and they should forgive and forbear; do you not like that Allāh may forgive you? And Allāh is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful" (24: 22).

The Qur'ān does not say, 'The most superior', but rather, 'those who possess superiority among you'. In other words, all the Companions are superior but Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ is the most superior of them all.

The masters of servants are many, but the real one who is the master of all masters.

The Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah ؓ narrates, "When Allāh gave the declaration of my innocence, (Sayyidunā) Abū Bakr ؓ, who used to provide for Mistāḥ Ibn Uthāthah for he was his relative, said, 'By Allāh, I will never provide Mistāḥ with anything because of what he said about 'Ā'ishah.' But Allāh later revealed, 'And may not those who possess superiority among you and possess capacity, swear not to give to the relatives and to the needy, and those who emigrate in Allāh's cause; and

they should forgive and forbear; do you not like that Allāh may forgive you? And Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful' (24:22). After that (Sayyidunā) Abū Bakr ؓ said, 'Yes! By Allāh, I would love that Allāh forgives me,' and resumed helping Mistāḥ whom he used to help before."¹⁷⁶

Another interesting fact is that though there were numerous Companions who possessed more wealth than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ, his wealth is known as *Afḍal al-Amwāl* (the best wealth) as it gave the most benefit to Islām and that is why the Prophet of Islām ﷺ said, "(Abū Bakr) is the best from the Muslims in terms of (the benefit of) wealth."

Verse 4: In another verse, Allāh says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْحَقِّ وَالْحَقَّ يَصُدُّونَ ۝

"And those who brought this truth and those who confirm it – it is they who are the righteous." (39: 33).

Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ says that the 'one who brought the truth' is the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and the 'one who testified to it' is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ.¹⁷⁷

The excellence of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ is established twofold from this verse: firstly, by all of the Companions being pronounced as being righteous and secondly, by being referred to specifically. Furthermore, his name is mentioned immediately following that of the Prophet of Allāh's ﷺ. The only person who would be able to comprehend this honour is the one who understands the status of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ that

¹⁷⁶ *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Shahādah, Ḥadīth #2661, vol. 2, p. 200.

¹⁷⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummal*, Ḥadīth #4576, vol.2, p. 207.

both are mentioned in the same place and described with the same quality.

Verse 5: It is in the Holy Qur'ān that those who spent their wealth in the way of Allāh before the conquest of Makkah and fought for His pleasure are superior to those who spent their wealth after the Conquest:

لَا يَسْتَوِي مَنْكُم مَّنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتْلِ الْكُفْرِ أَكْثَرَ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَقْتِنَا وَكُلًّا وَصَّيَّ اللَّهُ أَصْحَابُهَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۖ

"Those among you who spent and fought before the conquest of Makkah are not equal to others; they are greater in rank than those who spent and fought after the conquest; and Allāh has promised Paradise to all of them; and Allāh knows well what you do." (57: 10)

Those who are aware of the early periods of Islām certainly know that the one who at the very critical moments risked his life and spent everything he had for the sake of Islām was none other than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq.

Verse 6: Allāh says:

إِنَّمَا الْفِرَاقُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ ۖ

"Guide us on the Straight Path." (1:5).

In the commentary of this verse, the great Ṭābi'ī scholars Sayyidunā Khwājah Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Sayyidunā Abū al-ʿĀliyah say, "The (way of the) Prophet of Allāh and his two Companions (Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and Sayyidunā Umar) is the straight path."¹⁷⁸

It becomes clear from this verse and its commentary that the two great Companions are not only the leaders of the whole Community but also the leaders of the rest of the Companions, as all are supplicating to tread upon their path.

Verse 7: The Qur'ān calls Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and Sayyidunā Umar as 'Virtuous believers':

وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ مُلْكُهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ۚ

"...indeed Allāh is his (meaning His Prophet's) Guardian, and Jibrā'īl and the virtuous believers (Shaykhayn) are also his aides; and in addition the angels are also his aides." (66:4)

In the commentary of this verse, the Prophet of Allāh said, "The 'virtuous believers' are Abū Bakr and Umar."

According to the recitation of the leader of Qur'ānic Reciters, Sayyidunā Ubayy Ibn Ka'b, the verse was, "...the virtuous believers Abū Bakr and Umar are also his aides..."¹⁷⁹

Sayyidunā Umar said (the full wording of the Ḥadīth is mentioned later), "...Messenger of Allāh! Why should you be troubled by that matter? And if that has happened, then verily Allāh is with you, His angels, Jibrā'īl, Mikā'īl, and Abū Bakr and the believers are with you."¹⁸⁰

Shaykh 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Munāwī writes in *al-Taysīr Sharh Jamī' al-Ṣaghīr*, "Meaning: they are the most elevated among the Muslims in terms of attributes, and their status and rank is the greatest and loftiest after that of the Prophets."¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ *Tafsīr al-Durr al-Manthūr*, Sūrah Tahrīm, verse 4, vol. 8, p. 223.

¹⁸⁰ *Ṣaḥīh Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṭalāq, vol. 1, p. 480.

¹⁸¹ *Fayḍ al-Qadīr*, Sharḥ Jamī' al-Ṣaghīr, Ḥadīth #4985, vol. 4, p. 251.

Verse 8: Allāh mentioned the excellences of those who possess knowledge:

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَسْئَلُ الَّذِينَ يُعَلِّمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ أَمْ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ أَمْ أَتِلْكَ
 "Proclaim, 'Are the knowledgeable and the ignorant equal?'" It is only the people of intellect who heed advice." (39: 9)

Verse 9: In another place He - Most Exalted - says:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ أَمِنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَزِفُّونَ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
 "Allāh will raise the believers among you and those given knowledge to high ranks; and Allāh is Aware of your deeds"
 (58: 11)

Undoubtedly, the two blessed Companions were the most knowledgeable.

Verse 10: The Qur'ān testifies to the truthfulness of the Emigrants (Muhājirīn):

لَقَدْ آتَيْنَا الْيَهُودَ الْكِتَابَ وَتِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا كُنَّا بِغَافِلِينَ
 بِتَصْرِيفٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ
 "And (the booty is) also for the poor migrants who were expelled from their homes and their wealth, seeking Allāh's Munificence and His Pleasure, and aiding Allāh and His Noble Messenger; it is they who are the truthful." (59: 08).

The verse testifies to the truthfulness of the Emigrants, and it is the consensus of the Emigrants on the fact that the most superior are Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and Sayyidunā Umar ؓ; very few will be those who did not explicitly or implicitly mention their superiority.

Imām Ḥasan al-Baṣarī ؓ (as mentioned in *al-Taḥfīr al-Kabīr*) and Imām Abū Bakr Ibn Abī 'Ayāsh ؓ (as mentioned by Imām al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādādī) have proven the Caliphate of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ using this verse. This is because the Emigrants all agreed to call him "The Caliph of the Messenger of Allāh ؓ", and the Qur'ān bears testimony to their truthfulness. This has also been mentioned by Ibn Kathīr and 'Allāmah Ibn Hajar al-Makī in *al-Sawā'iq*.

My friend! You have just witnessed the Qur'ān bearing testimony on the virtue and superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There is nothing greater than the Holy Qur'ān. Leave the unsound reasoning, imperfect intellect and submit to the verses of the Holy Qur'ān.

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ
 "Falsehood cannot approach it - neither from in front of it nor from behind it; it is sent down by the Wise, the Most Praiseworthy." (41:42).

Furthermore, Allāh says,

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ
 ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبِّي عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ
 "And whatever you may differ upon, the final decision therein belongs to Allāh; such is my Lord - I rely on Him; and towards Him do I turn." (42:10)

If you do not listen to the Words of Allāh how then will you listen to the words of others?

لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾
 "Only His is the command, and it is towards Him that you will be returned." (28:88)

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَكْبَرَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾
 "Is not Allāh the Greatest Judge of all judges?" (95:8).

Section B3: The Prophetic Sayings (Aḥādith)

Aḥādith proving the superiority of the *Shaykhayn*. There are too many to cite exhaustively here. Thus, only a few are mentioned herewith:

Ḥadīth 1: The Companions would say, "During the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, we would say that the best from this community after the Prophet ﷺ is Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, then Sayyidunā ʿUmar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, then Sayyidunā ʿUthmān Ibn ʿAffān"¹⁸² ﷺ. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ heard these words and did not refuse them [the 'Silent Approval' (*Taqwīn*) Ḥadīth].

Ḥadīth 2: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The Sun has not risen or set upon anyone more superior than Abū Bakr except that he was a Prophet."¹⁸³ (ﷺ)

Ḥadīth 3: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The Sun has not risen over any of you who is better than Abū Bakr."¹⁸⁴ (ﷺ)

Ḥadīth 4: The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ has said, "*Rūḥ al-Qudus*, Jibrāʾīl ﷺ came and informed me that the best from my nation after me is Abū Bakr."¹⁸⁵

Ḥadīth 5: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Abū Bakr is the best of all people except the Prophets."¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² *Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, ʿAbd-Allāh Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ *Ḥadīth* #13132, vol. 12, p. 221.
¹⁸³ *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*, ʿAdāʾil Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ, *Ḥadīth* #36619, vol. 11, p. 254.

¹⁸⁴ *Al-Kāmil fī Duʿafā al-Rijāl*, ʿIkrimah Ibn ʿAmmār, *Ḥadīth* #276, vol. 5, p. 484.
¹⁸⁵ *Majmaʿ al-Zawāʾid*, *Ḥadīth* #1431, vol. 9, p. 24.

¹⁸⁶ *Al-Muʿjam al-Awsat*, *Ḥadīth* #6448, vol. 5, p. 18.
¹⁸⁷ *Al-Kāmil fī Duʿafā al-Rijāl*, ʿIkrimah Ibn ʿAmmār, *Ḥadīth* #32561, vol. 6, p. 484.

Hadith 6: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "No Companion of a Prophet or Messenger, nor the Companion of Yāsīn¹⁸⁷, has been greater than Abū Bakr."¹⁸⁸

Hadith 7: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Jibrā'īl (عليه السلام) came to me and I asked, 'Who will emigrate (to al-Madinah al-Munawwarah) with me?' He answered, 'Abū Bakr, and he is going to be the guardian of your Community's affair after you and he is the best of your Community.'"¹⁸⁹

Hadith 8-9: The Beloved Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The best of my Community after me is Abū Bakr and 'Umar."¹⁹⁰

Hadith 10: Narrated by Sayyidunā 'Alī and also by Sayyidunā Zubayr Ibn al-'Awwām ﷺ that the Master of the Universe ﷺ has said, "Abū Bakr and 'Umar are the best of all those who came before and those who are to come, the best from the dwellers of the heavens and earth, save the Prophets and Messengers."¹⁹¹

Hadith 11-15: Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ has said, "I was with the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ when Abū Bakr and 'Umar ﷺ came from ahead of us. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to me, 'O 'Alī! These two are the leaders of all the old and young from the dwellers of Jannah after the Prophets and Messengers.'"

¹⁸⁷ A man (named Habib al-Najār) from the Town advises the people to accept the call of the Messengers as mentioned in *Sūrah Yāsīn*.

¹⁸⁸ *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), vol. 62, p. 427. *Subul al-Hudā wa al-Rushād*, vol. 11, p. 247.

¹⁸⁹ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Faḍā'il Abi Bakr al-Siddiq ﷺ, Hadith #32585, vol. 11, p. 251.

¹⁹⁰ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Faḍā'il Abi Bakr Wa 'Umar, Hadith #32660, vol. 11, p. 258.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. Hadith #3266.

Narrated by Imām Ḥasan al-Mujtabā ﷺ¹⁹², Sayyidunā Anas ibn Mālik¹⁹³, Sayyidunā Abū Juhayfah¹⁹⁴, Sayyidunā Jābir ibn 'Abd-Allāh and Sayyidunā Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī ﷺ¹⁹⁵.

Hadith 16: Once Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā ﷺ was seen walking in front of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq ﷺ. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said to him, "Are you walking in front of that person which the Sun has not risen over anyone better than?"¹⁹⁶

In a variant, "Are you walking in front of that person who is better than you? The Sun has not risen over anyone better than Abū Bakr excluding the Prophets and Messengers."¹⁹⁷

Hadith 17: In another narration, "Are you walking in front of that person who is better than you?" Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā ﷺ asked, "O Prophet of Allāh! (Is he) better than me?" The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ replied, "Better than you and the people of Makkah." He again asked, "(Is he) better than me and the people of Makkah?" He ﷺ replied, "He is better than you, the people of Makkah and the people of al-Madinah." He asked, "(Is he) better than me, the people of Makkah and the people of al-Madinah?"

He ﷺ answered him saying, "The heavens have not shaded anyone nor has the earth carried anyone who is better than Abū Bakr other than the Prophets and Messengers."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹² *Musnad Imām Ahmad*, Musnad 'Alī ibn Abi Tālib ﷺ, Hadith #602, vol. 2, p. 174.

¹⁹³ *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārāh*, Hadith 3226, vol. 1, p. 679.

¹⁹⁴ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Bāb Faḍl Abi Bakr al-Siddiq, Hadith #100, vol. 1, p. 37.

¹⁹⁵ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, Hadith #8808, vol. 8, p. 340. Ibid. Hadith 4431, vol. 4, p. 359.

¹⁹⁶ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 12, p. 224.

¹⁹⁷ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Kitāb al-Faḍā'il, Faḍl al-Shaykhayn ﷺ, Hadith #36107, vol. 13, p. 7.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. Hadith #36107, vol. 13, p. 7.

Part C: Further Virtues & Excellences of the *Shaykhayn*

Imām Aḥmad Ridā ؒ wrote this part in several sections. Only three sections; Section 1, Section 2 and Section 6 have actually been located. This indicates that there were at least six sections in this part. Moreover, the Imām writes in one place, "...like it will be proven in the section of *al-Wazārah* (ministry)" and in another place he writes, "In the section of *al-'Ilm* (knowledge)", however these two sections are not present in the manuscript obtained. This suggests that there are in fact more than six sections in this part.

From the sections we have, the great Imām mentions the sacrifices and the willingness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ to give his life for the honour of Islām and the Prophet of Islām ؐ in the first section.

In section two, the physical description of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ and some of the instances in which he was present with the Prophet of Allāh ؐ are mentioned.

In section six, the great Imām writes about the bond and resemblances of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ to the Beloved of Allāh ؐ. Unfortunately, this section is incomplete in the manuscript we have. The Imām mentions 6 resemblances.

A summary of the sections is as follows:



Section C1: The Sacrifices of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ

Aḥādīth which prove that the readiness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ to sacrifice his life for the Prophet of Allāh ؐ was far greater than any other Companion.

Allāh chose Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ to protect His Beloved ؐ by endangering his own life. Thousands of years of worship are not even equal to an hour of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq's ؓ services. This is true to such an extent that Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ said, "Abū Bakr's one day (in the cave of Thawr) is far superior to the whole life of 'Umar."¹⁹⁹

The way Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ showed courage and support for the Prophet of Allāh ؐ during times of severe difficulties cannot be replicated by anyone. In proving this point, the following Aḥādīth are cited:

Hadīth 1: Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ states, "Mercy of Allāh upon you, O Abū Bakr! You were an affectionate Companion and friend of the Prophet of Allāh; a source of joy to him; and one who knew his secrets and enjoyed the privilege of being consulted by him. You supported the truth of his message at a time when everybody belied him; you supported him when others had deserted him; and you remained firm in helping him in trials

when others had withdrawn their support. In the days of hardship you were his best Companion."²⁰⁰

During the early period of Islām, when the disbelievers were in control and tried their utmost to cause harm to the Beloved Prophet of Allāh ؐ, it was only Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ who showed his full support and defended the Messenger of Allāh ؐ. At certain times when there were enemies around, he would seek and become the attention of the enemies by which they would divert their cruelty and abuse towards him rather than the Prophet of Allāh ؐ. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ would bear the persecution of the enemies but could not bear to see his Beloved ؐ harmed even the slightest.

Hadīth 2: Once, when the Prophet of Allāh ؐ was praying in the vicinity of the Ka'bah, 'Uqbah Ibn Abī Mu'īt came and wrapped a piece of cloth around his blessed neck and began choking him severely. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ came along, grabbed his shoulders and pushed him away from the Prophet of Allāh ؐ saying: "Do you kill a man just because he says 'My Lord is Allāh'?"²⁰¹

Hadīth 3: The disbelievers began to attack the Prophet of Allāh ؐ one day until he ؐ lost consciousness. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ stood and began calling out: 'Woe unto you! Do you kill a man just for saying my Lord is Allāh? The people asked one another: "Who is this?" And they said: "That is Ibn Abī Quḥāfah, the madman."²⁰²

Hadīth 4: The Noble Prophet ؐ would openly denounce the idols. He ؐ declared they could do neither any good nor harm.

¹⁹⁹ *Al-Baḥr al-Zakh'khār* (Musnad al-Bazzāz), Hadīth #928, vol. 3, p. 138.

²⁰¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Faḍā'il, Hadīth #3678, vol. 2, p. 524.

²⁰² *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, Hadīth #4424, vol. 4, p. 11.

One day the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was praying in the vicinity of the Ka'bah. Whenever the disbelievers asked him ﷺ a question, he ﷺ would answer with the truth. They asked, "Are you mocking our idols?" So the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "Yes." They then attacked him ﷺ all together.

A man went quickly to inform Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ. He immediately ran to the help of the Prophet ﷺ and he pushed them away and said, "Do you kill a man just because he says, 'My Lord is Allāh' and even though he ﷺ has brought to you clear signs from His Lord?"

Thereupon Abū Jahl and other enemies of Islām began beating Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ heavily. The beating was so severe that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ fell unconscious. He had to be carried to his house and he did not regain consciousness for several hours. He would keep repeating, "How Blessed are You, O the Most Magnificent, the Most Generous!"²⁰³

Hadith 5: Another similar incident occurred, and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was seen weeping whilst reciting the following verse to the *kuffār*: "What! You want to kill a man just because he says, 'Allāh is my Lord' whereas he has indeed brought clear signs to you from your Lord? And supposedly if he is speaking wrongly, then the calamity of wrongful speech is upon him; and if he is truthful, then part of what he promises you will reach you; indeed Allāh does not guide any transgressor, excessive liar."²⁰⁴

Hadith 6: Sayyidunā 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib ﷺ epitomises the reputation of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ as a quiet achiever who

never put his own needs first and was devoted to Islām and its Messenger, Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ.²⁰⁵

When Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ became the leader of the Muslims, he delivered a speech in which he enquired of his audience, "Who is the most courageous man in Islām?" The audience responded, "You! Amīr al Mu'minīn (Leader of the faithful)."

He looked at the men seated before him and said, "It is true I have never faced an opponent and lost, but I am not the most courageous. That honour belongs to Abū Bakr." He then narrated the above incident of how Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ protected the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ when nobody was able to protect him. After narrating this, Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ began to weep so much so that his blessed beard became soaked with his tears.

Then Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ asked: "Who is better, Abū Bakr or the believer from the family of Pharaoh?"²⁰⁶ The people remained quiet. He said: "Why don't you answer? By Allāh! One moment in the life of Abū Bakr is greater than the entire life of the believer from the family of Pharaoh! The believer from the family of Pharaoh was a man who concealed his faith while Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was a man who proclaimed his faith publicly."

²⁰⁵ *Musnad al-Bazzār* #928 – Vol. 3, Pg. 138, *al-Aḥādith al-Mukhtārāh* – al-Maqdisī #398 – vol. 2, p. 15

²⁰⁶ His story has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, "And said a Muslim man from the people of Fir'aun, who used to hide his faith, 'What! You want to kill a man just because he says, 'Allāh is my Lord' whereas he has indeed brought clear signs to you from your Lord? And supposedly if he is speaking wrongly, then the calamity of wrongful speech is upon him; and if he is truthful, then part of what he promises you will reach you; indeed Allāh does not guide any transgressor, excessive liar." (40:28).

²⁰³ *Sūrah al-Mu'min* – 40:28, *Musnad Abi Ya'īā*, *Hadith* #48, vol. 1, p. 42.

²⁰⁴ *Tarīkh Dimashq*, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ, vol. 30, p. 54.

Ḥadīth 7: When there were merely 39 Muslims, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ sought the permission of the Messenger of Allāh ؐ to invite people openly. On his persistent request the Messenger of Allāh ؐ gave his consent and all of them went to the Ḥaram to preach. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ delivered the first ever *Khuṭbah* (Sermon) at that time; and became the first of the Companions to invite others towards Allāh and His Beloved Messenger ؐ. Sayyidunā Ḥamzah ؓ accepted Islām on the very same day. When the disbelievers and idolaters from amongst the Quraysh heard it they attacked the Muslims from all sides. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ, despite being regarded as the noblest of all the people in Makkah, was beaten to within a whisker of his life. He was kicked, thrashed with shoes, trampled under feet and handled most roughly and savagely. He became unconscious. This is the place to observe his extreme love for the Holy Prophet ؐ that when he gained consciousness and opened his eyes in the evening he first enquired, "How is the Messenger of Allāh ؐ?" His deep love for the Sublime Prophet ؐ, in reality, was the primary cause of his success. His love and respect for the Messenger of Allāh ؐ was without limit.²⁰⁷

Ḥadīth 8: On the day of the Battle of Badr, he had his sword unsheathed and would circle the Messenger of Allāh ؐ, defending him ؐ and attacking anyone who attempted to confront him ؐ.

Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ relates that on the day of (the Battle of) Badr, the Muslims built a tent (*'arīsh*) for the Messenger of Allāh ؐ and we discussed who would guard the Messenger of Allāh ؐ. I swear by Allāh! No one other than Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ guarded him. The Prophet ؐ stayed in the tent for some time,

praying for the success of his nation, while Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ could be seen walking back and forth; his sword unsheathed, ready to repel any threat to his Beloved ؐ.²⁰⁸

Ḥadīth 9: During the night of Hīrah (the Emigration), Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ would at times walk in front of the Messenger of Allāh ؐ, at times behind him, at times on his right and at other times on his left; protecting the Prophet of Allāh ؐ (from all directions) lest any disbeliever launched an attack.

In the night of Hīrah (Emigration), the blessed feet of the Beloved Prophet ؐ became swollen so Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ carried him ؐ on his shoulders and walked briskly until they reached a cave²⁰⁹. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ first entered the cave to check for any harm. When he cleaned the cave, he went out and carried the Prophet of Allāh ؐ into the cave. There was a hole in the cave, so he covered the hole with his heel fearing lest a poisonous creature should cause harm to the Beloved ؐ.

The Mercy of the Universe ؐ placed his blessed head on the lap of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ؓ and went to sleep. Whilst in this state, a snake bit his foot. The greatest Companion did not move his foot lest, in the slightest, it would disturb the sleep of his Beloved ؐ. However, due to the excruciating pain, tears fell from his eyes and landed on the blessed face of the Beloved ؐ. The Messenger of Allāh ؐ woke up and asked as to what had happened. He replied saying that a snake had bitten his foot. So the Beloved of Allāh ؐ rubbed his blessed saliva on his foot and it was immediately healed. However, in the latter days of his life,

²⁰⁷ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, Ḥadīth #7306,

²⁰⁸ *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 12, p. 335.
²⁰⁹ Cave of Thaur

the pain returned and was ultimately the cause of his martyrdom - [ﷺ].²¹⁰

Hadith 10: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq رضي الله عنه narrates: "After we had left the Cave of Thawr, whilst seeking shade, I noticed a boulder which offered some shade. So we dismounted there and I levelled a place and covered it with an animal hide for the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) to sleep (for a while). I then said, 'Sleep, O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and I will guard you.' So the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) slept and I went out to guard him (ﷺ). Suddenly I saw a shepherd approaching us. I asked him, 'To whom do you belong, O boy?' He replied, 'I belong to a man of Quraysh.' The boy mentioned his name, and I recognised him. I said, 'Do your sheep give milk?' He replied, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Will you milk them for us?' He said, 'Yes.'

He caught hold of a sheep and I asked him to clean its teat from dust, hairs and dirt. The shepherd milked a little milk in a wooden container. I had a leather container which I carried for the Beloved Messenger (ﷺ) to drink water and perform ablution from.

I went to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), reluctant to wake him up, but when I returned to him, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was already awake. I added water to the milk container, till the milk became cold. Then I said, 'Drink, O Prophet of Allāh (ﷺ)!' He (ﷺ) drank till I was pleased. Then he (ﷺ) asked, 'Has the time for our departure come?' I said, 'Yes.' So we departed after midday. Surāqah Ibn Mālīk (رضي الله عنه) who at this stage had not as yet embraced Islām) followed us and I said, 'We have been caught,

O Messenger of Allāh!' He (ﷺ) said, 'Do not despair, for Allāh is with us!'

The Prophet (ﷺ) invoked a prayer against him (i.e. Surāqah) and so the legs of his horse sank into the earth up to its belly. Surāqah said, 'I see that you have invoked against me. Please invoke good for me, and by Allāh, I will cause those who are seeking you to return.' The Prophet (ﷺ) invoked goodness for him and he was saved. Then, whenever he met somebody on the way, he would say, 'I have looked for him here in vain.' So he caused whomever he met to return. Thus Surāqah fulfilled his promise."²¹¹

When Surāqah approached, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه began to worry and wept. The Prophet of Allāh asked, "Why are you crying O Abū Bakr?" He replied, "O Messenger of Allāh, I am not crying for fear that they will kill me. I am afraid for you."²¹²

In short, in every state and circumstance, the greatest Companion risked his life in order to protect the Prophet of Allāh (ﷺ) and in every difficult situation he accompanied him (ﷺ).

Allāh does not choose an insignificant individual for the fulfilment of an important task. Allāh chose Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq رضي الله عنه in order to protect and defend His Beloved (ﷺ). This illustrates the fact that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq رضي الله عنه was the most worthy of such a task. He became the most intimate friend of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his most beloved.

The qualities which are essential to become worthy of such a position are:

²¹⁰ *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* (Imām al-Bayhaqī) - Vol. 1, pg. 317 #731

²¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Hijrat al-Nabiyy (ﷺ), Ḥadīth # 3626, vol. 2, p. 689.

²¹² *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, Kitāb al-Tarīkh, Ḥadīth 6248, vol. 8, p. 64.

1. The lover's habits and lifestyle to be very similar to that of his beloved's, and will often seem to be the same.
 2. The beloved having absolute trust in his lover.
 3. The love of the beloved shines so brilliantly in the lover's heart that he forgets everything and everyone in order to be united with his beloved; and to protect his beloved from the slightest harm, he would be willing to sacrifice his own life.
 4. Absolute forbearance and patience is granted to him such that difficulties and toils do not cause him to waiver.
 5. Courage, valour and generosity are found in the lover.
- Allāh choosing such an individual for His Beloved ﷺ is an indication that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ possessed all four qualities at the highest level.

Section C2: The Status of the *Shaykhayn* in the Eyes of the Prophet ﷺ

No doubt, there were none closer to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ than the *Shaykhayn*. Some of the reasons for this are as follows:

Reason 1: No one from the *Anṣār* (Helpers) and the *Muhājirūn* (Emigrants) had the courage to look directly at the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ but the two blessed Companions looked at his blessed face and he ﷺ would look at them.²¹³

Reason 2: They would smile at him ﷺ and he ﷺ would smile at them and this is highly indicative of the closeness between them and the great distinction the *Shaykhayn* had with him ﷺ.²¹⁴

Reason 3: The Companions would address each other by their respective names but Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ would be addressed with his titles. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ himself would also address Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ with his titles.²¹⁵

Reason 4: If Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ was absent from a blessed gathering, his place would be left empty and none of the Companions would occupy that place out of respect for him. When he would come he would sit in his place. The Beloved of Allāh ﷺ would turn towards him and would converse with him directly while the rest would listen.²¹⁶

²¹³ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3688, vol. 5, 386.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ *Uṣd al-Ghābah*, Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh Ibn 'Uthmān, vol. 2, p. 301.

²¹⁶ *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Sahīḥayn*, (Imām al-Hākim), vol. 3, p. 293.

Reason 5: The Prophet ﷺ would listen to poetry from Sayyidunā Ḥassān Ibn Thābit ؓ in praise of his beloved [Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ].

"The second of the two in the lofty cave and

Verily, the enemy encircled it when they ascended the mountain,

And indeed he is the unparalleled beloved of the Prophet of Allāh

And the entirety of creation has knowledge of this."

When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ heard these verses from Sayyidunā Ḥassān ؓ, he ؓ smiled and said, "O Ḥassān! Indeed you have spoken the truth."²¹⁷

Reason 6: In his absence, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned to the Companions the status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ with the words, "Now will come the one, the like of whom, Allāh has not created after me. And on the Day of Judgement his intercession will be like my intercession." When Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ arrived, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ stood up for him, kissed his forehead and embraced him for a long time.²¹⁸

Reason 7: Once whilst the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions swam in a river, he ؓ instructed the Companions to swim to their dearest friend. All the Companions did so until there remained only the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr

al-Ṣiddiq ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ swam towards him, embraced him and said, "If I was to choose a dearest friend then verily I would have chosen Abū Bakr. However, He (Allāh) is my intimate friend (*Khalīl*)."²¹⁹

Reason 8: Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ mentions his greatness, "You possessed the best qualities; you had the best past; you ranked the highest; and you were closest to him ؓ."²²⁰

Reason 9: Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn 'Alī ؓ was once asked about the status of the *Shaykhayn* in the court of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He replied, "They are both resting next to the Prophet of Allāh ؓ."²²¹

Reason 10: Whenever the Prophet ﷺ mentioned his Companions, he ؓ would mention the *Shaykhayn* first.

Reason 11: On returning from the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon. After praising Allāh he ؓ said, "O People! Indeed Abū Bakr has not upset me at all, so understand his status. I am pleased with Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Talhah, Zubayr, Sa'd, 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn 'Awf and the First Emigrants (*al-Muhājirīn al-Awwalīn*) - so understand their status."²²²

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ mentioned him separately first, then with the rest, illustrating his prominent status in the eyes of the Messenger ؓ.

²¹⁷ *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh wa yuqāl 'Atīq, Ḥadīth #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

²¹⁸ *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (Imām al-Ḥakīm), Dhikr Abī Bakr Ibn Abī Quḥāfah, Ḥadīth #4461, vol. 3, p. 82.

²¹⁹ *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3, p. 123

²²⁰ *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Dhikr 'Abd-Allāh wa yuqāl 'Atīq, Ḥadīth #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

²¹⁹ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 'Abd-Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ, Ḥadīth #10106, vol. 10, p. 105.

²²⁰ *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ, Ḥadīth #3398, Vol. 30, p. 152.

²²¹ *Tārīkh Dimashq*, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ, vol. 30, p. 54.

²²² *Mustad Imām Ahmad*, vol. 4, p. 96.

²²³ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Ḥadīth #5640, vol. 6, p. 104.

Reason 12: On the day of the Conquest of Makkah, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ took his father to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On seeing him the Beloved of Allāh ﷺ said, "Why did you trouble him; I would have come to him in your house". Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ said "O Prophet of Allāh! It was more appropriate for him to come to you." The Holy Prophet ﷺ made Abū Quhāfah (the father of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ) sit before him ﷺ and patted his chest, and moved him to accept Islām which he (immediately) did.²²³

Reason 13: The Prophet ﷺ has said, "Indeed there are two angels in the heavens. One commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He ﷺ then named the angels, Sayyidunā Jibrā'il ؑ and Sayyidunā Mikā'il ؑ. Then he ﷺ said, "And there are two Prophets, one commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He then mentioned their names, Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm ؑ and Sayyidunā Nūh ؑ. Then he ﷺ said, "And I have two Companions, one commands with strictness and the other with gentleness and both are correct." He ﷺ then mentioned Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ.²²⁴

Reason 14: It was the habit of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ that he ؓ would visit the house of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ twice in a day - and this is a blessing which is not describable.

The Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah ؓ narrates, "Ever since I reached the age of discernment, I have always known my parents to practise Islām; not a day has passed but

the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ visited us, both in the morning and the evening."²²⁵

Reason 15: The status of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ in the court of the Prophet ﷺ was so well known, that even the disbelievers would come to him after the Prophet ﷺ. They would consider his opinion to be the opinion of the Prophet ﷺ.

Reason 16: It was observed on many occasions that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would converse with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ, and through him, he ؓ would answer many questions even though Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ had nothing directly to do with the questions nor the questioner. Even when making general comments, he ؓ would address them to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would turn towards him, and would answer the questions by conversing with him. As mentioned in the incident of Sayyidunā Buraydah al-Aslamī ؓ and the 70 riders who came to the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.²²⁶

In another narration, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was resting in his tent and then raised his head crying (in joy) and said, "O Abū Bakr! Glad tidings to you. The Victory of Allāh has come. By Allāh, I can see Jibrā'il ؑ on his mare in the air. He descended, mounted upon the mare and then disappeared. Then when he appeared I saw dust on his lips (meaning he took part in the battle)."²²⁷

²²³ *Musnad* - Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Asmā bint Abi Bakr ؓ, Hadith #27023, vol. 10, p. 274.

²²⁴ *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, Hadith #19667, vol. 13, p. 214.

²²⁵ *Sūḥil al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Hijrat al-Nabiyy ﷺ, vol. 2, p. 3616.

²²⁶ *Al-Isfī'āb fī Ma'rifa al-Ashāb*, vol. 1, p. 63

²²⁷ *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, Sūrah al-Anfāl, verse 9, vol. 4, p. 25.

When the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ entered Makkah on the day of the Conquest, he ﷺ observed the women cleaning the dust from the mouths of the horses. So he ﷺ smiled towards Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ and said, "O Abū Bakr, what does Ḥassān Ibn Thābit say?" So he read the verses:

May I lose my sons if you do not see our horses, O Kuffar of Makkah,

Causing dust to rise from both sides of Kadā (a hill near Makkah)

They pull at the reins quickly

The women wiping them with their veils.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ then said, "Enter from the place Ḥassān has mentioned (the mount of Kadā)." ²²⁸

During the Battle of Uhud, Sayyidunā Talḥah ؓ shielded the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ turned around to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ and said, "O Abū Bakr! Talḥah has made Paradise necessary for him." ²²⁹

Reason 17: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would teach his Companions to respect Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ and this denoted the great status he had in the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ. ²³⁰

Once there was a disagreement between Sayyidunā Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ was informed

²²⁸ *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, Kitāb Ma'rifa al-Ṣaḥābah, Ḥadīth #4499, vol. 4, p. 19.

²²⁹ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Ḥadīth #3759, vol. 5, p. 412.

²³⁰ *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (Imām al-Ḥākim), Kitāb al-Nikāḥ, Ḥadīth #2718, vol. 2, p. 188.

so he ؓ said, "O Rabī'ah, what do you and al-Ṣiddiq disagree upon?" He replied, "O Prophet of Allāh! He wanted me to say the same words to him as he had said to me and I did not."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes, don't say the same words to him as he had said to you. Instead say: 'May God forgive you, Abū Bakr.' With tears in his eyes, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ went away while saying: "May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b, may Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b..." ²³¹

Once the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ saw a Companion walk in front of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. He ؓ said to him, "Do you walk in front of the one who is far better than you?" ²³² This narration has also been cited in the previous part.

Reason 18: Even during the time of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ, both (the *Shaykhayn*) would take care of the affairs of the people. People would come to them to enquire about the rulings and ask for their verdict. ²³³

Once Sayyidunā Abū al-Yusr (Ka'b Ibn 'Amr al-Anṣārī) ؓ erred and sought Sayyidunā Abū Bakr's ؓ counsel. He replied, "Fear Allāh. Conceal it, ask for forgiveness and do not inform anyone of it." ²³⁴

Reason 19: On the day of (the Battle of) Badr, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ was given control of the right wing of the army. Angel Jibrā'īl ؑ descended with a thousand angels towards him. The

²³¹ *Musnad Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, vol. 4, p. 58.

²³² *Al-Jāmi' li-Akhlāq al-Rawī wa Ḍaḍab al-Sāmi'* (al-Kharīb al-Baghḍādī) *Al-Istī'āb fī Ma'rifa al-Aṣḥāb*, Buraydah al-Aslamī ؓ vol. 1, p. 56.

²³³ *Al-Muṣannaf* - 'Abd al-Razzāq, Bāb al-Rajm wa al-Iḥṣān, Ḥadīth #13342, vol. 7, p. 323.

²³⁴ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 2, p. 144.

left side of the army was in the control of Sayyidunā 'Alī ؑ and Angel Mikā'īل came with other angels to him.²³⁵

Everyone knows the difference in importance between the right and left wing of an army, and also of who the most superior angel is. The most superior angel, Sayyidunā Jibra'īل, was sent to the one who is most superior.

Reason 20: When the Prophet of Allāh ؐ saw the disbelievers approaching the plains of Badr, he ؐ supplicated, "O Allāh! Quraysh appear, with pride and arrogance, to oppose You and to deny Your Prophet!" The Prophet ؐ held the shoulder of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ and said, "O Allāh! I ask from You what You have promised."

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ said, "Glad tidings! By Allāh! Allāh shall fulfil the promise He made to His Prophet (ﷺ)."²³⁶

Reason 21: When the Prophet ؐ manifested his anger, no one had the courage to speak to him except for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ.²³⁷

Once Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ came and sought permission to see the Messenger of Allāh ؐ. He found people sitting at his door and none amongst them had been granted permission, but it was granted to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ so he went inside. Then came Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ who too was granted permission to enter; upon doing so he found the Prophet of Allāh ؐ sitting, sad and silent, with his wives around him (ﷺ). Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ said, "I would say something which would make the Holy

Prophet ؐ smile," so he said, "O Messenger of Allāh! I wish you had seen the daughter of Khārījāh (Sayyidunā 'Umar's wife ؑ) when she asked me for some money. I got up and slapped her on her neck." The Messenger of Allāh ؐ smiled and said, "They are around me as you see, asking for extra money."

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؑ then got up, went to Sayyidatunā 'Ā'ishah ؑ and counselled her, and Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ stood up before Sayyidatunā Ḥafṣah ؑ and counselled her saying, "Do not ask the Prophet of Allāh ؐ for that which he does not have." They said, "By Allāh, we do not ask the Prophet of Allāh ؐ for anything he (ﷺ) does not possess."²³⁸

Sayyidunā 'Umar ؑ narrates:

When the Prophet of Allāh ؐ kept himself away from his wives, I entered the Masjid, and found people striking the ground with stones and saying: "The Prophet of Allāh ؐ has divorced his wives." This was before they were commanded to observe seclusion.

I went in and found Rabāh, the servant of the Prophet ؐ, sitting on the edge of the window dangling his feet on the hollow wood of the date-palm with the help of which the Prophet ؐ climbed up (into the house) and came down. I cried, "O Rabāh! Seek permission for me from the Prophet ؐ."

Rabāh cast a glance at the house and then looked towards me but said nothing. I again said, "Rabāh, seek permission for me from the Beloved of Allāh ؐ. Rabāh looked towards the house and then cast a glance at me, but said nothing. I then raised my voice and said, "O Rabāh! Seek permission for me from the Prophet of Allāh ؐ. I think that Allāh's Messenger ؐ is under

²³⁵ *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, (Ibn Sa'd), Bāb Ghazwah Badr, vol. 2, p. 16.

²³⁶ *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* (Imām al-Bayhaqī), vol. 3, p. 110.

²³⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ḥadīth #2703, vol. 2, p. 439.

²³⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ṭalāq, Ḥadīth #1477, p. 783.

the impression that I have come for the sake of Ḥaḥṣah. By Allāh! If the Prophet ﷺ would command me to strike her neck, I would certainly strike her neck!" I raised my voice and he indicated to me to climb up (into the house). I visited the Messenger ﷺ and he (ﷺ) was lying on a mat. I sat down and he drew up his lower garment over him and he had nothing (else) over him, and the mat had left its marks on his sides. I looked with my eyes in the store room of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. I found only a handful of barley equal to one Sā' and an equal quantity of the Mimosa leaves placed in the nook of the cell, and a semi-tanned leather bag hanging, and I was moved to tears (on seeing this extremely austere lifestyle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ).

On entering I saw signs of anger on his blessed face, I therefore said, "O Messenger of Allāh! What concerns you about your wives? and if you have divorced them, verily Allāh is with you; and His angels, Jibrā'īl, Mikā'īl, I and Abū Bakr and the believers are with you."

And so the verse of Option (Āyat al-Takhyīr) was revealed, "If you both (wives of the Holy Prophet), incline towards Allāh, for indeed your hearts have deviated a little; and if you come together against him then indeed Allāh is his Supporter, and Jibrā'īl and the virtuous believers are also his aides; and in addition the angels are also his aides." (66:4)

I enquired, "Messenger of Allāh, have you divorced them? He ﷺ said, "No." I said, "Messenger of Allāh! The conjecture of the people is contrary to this – when I entered the Masjid and found the Muslims playing with pebbles (absorbed in thought) and saying, "The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has divorced his wives." Should I inform them that you have not divorced them to correct their misunderstanding?" He said, "Yes, if you so like."

I continued talking to him (ﷺ) until I saw the signs of anger disappear from his blessed face and (his seriousness was changed to a happy mood and as a result thereof) his face had the natural tranquillity upon it and he (ﷺ) smiled - and his teeth were the most beautiful. Then the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ climbed down and I also climbed down by catching hold of the wood of the palm-tree, but he (ﷺ) came down as if he was walking on the ground, not touching anything with his hand for support. I said, "Messenger of Allāh! You remained in your house for twenty-nine days." He said, "The month consists of twenty-nine days."

I stood at the door of the Masjid and I called out at the top of my voice, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has not divorced his wives..."²³⁹

Reason 22: No one had the permission of passing judgement or an edict without the permission of the Prophet ﷺ except for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). This will be elaborated in the Section of Knowledge.

Reason 23: No one shall be allowed to take their book of deeds before Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (رضي الله عنه). The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "A caller will call out on the Day of Judgement saying, 'No one should take their book of deeds before Abū Bakr and 'Umar (رضي الله عنه).'"²⁴⁰

The waiting period before the commencement of the accounting on the Day of Judgement will be unbearable. People will plead for the accounting to take place so that they be freed from this terrible state. However, Allāh will remove the two beloveds of His Beloved ﷺ first from this situation.

²³⁹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb al-Talāq, Ḥadīth #1479, p. 783.

²⁴⁰ Jamī' al-Jawāmī', Ḥadīth #17572, vol. 1, p. 244.

Reason 24: He ﷺ has said, "The first of my Community to enter Jannah will be Abū Bakr (ﷺ)." ²⁴¹

Reason 25: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Everyone will be held to account (on the Day of Judgement) save Abū Bakr (ﷺ)." ²⁴²

Reason 26: The Prophet ﷺ also said to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā 'Umar (ﷺ), "After me, no one shall rule over you." ²⁴³

Reason 27: During the prayers, the *Shaykhayn* would stand in the first row on the right hand side of the Prophet ﷺ. ²⁴⁴

Reason 28: Sayyidunā Aswad al-Tamīmī (ﷺ) narrates, "I recited a few verses in praise of Allāh in the presence of Beloved Prophet ﷺ. Whilst I was reading them out, a tall man with small eyes entered. The Prophet ﷺ told me to pause. When he left, the Prophet ﷺ told me to resume. I asked about the person, so he (ﷺ) replied, "He is 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and he keeps no relation with falsehood." ²⁴⁵

Reason 29: If ever there was a disagreement between Sayyidunā Abū Bakr radiyAllāhu 'anhu and a Companion, the latter would always show respect to him. If the Prophet ﷺ was informed of such disagreements and arguments then he would

reprimand the Companion even if the liability would lie with Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq (ﷺ).

We have already cited the Ḥadīth previously (under reason 15): Once Sayyidunā Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr (ﷺ) had an argument. The Prophet ﷺ was informed so he (ﷺ) said, "O Rabī'ah, what's wrong with you and al-Siddiq?" He replied saying, "Prophet of Allāh! He wanted me to say the same words to him as he had said to me and I did not."

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, "Yes, don't say the same words to him as he had said to you. Instead say: 'May Allāh forgive you, Abū Bakr.' With tears in his eyes, Abū Bakr (ﷺ) went away while saying, 'May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b, May Allāh reward you with goodness for my sake, O Rabī'ah Ibn Ka'b.'" ²⁴⁶

It is related that Sayyidunā Abū al-Dardā (ﷺ) said, "I was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ when Abū Bakr (ﷺ) came, holding the end of his garment so that he uncovered his knee. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Your companion has had a disagreement." He greeted him (ﷺ) and said, "There was a disagreement between me and Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. I spoke harshly to him and then regretted it. I asked him to forgive me and he refused to do so; so I came to you. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "May Allāh forgive you, Abū Bakr" thrice. Then Sayyidunā 'Umar (ﷺ) felt remorseful and went to the house of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr (ﷺ) and asked, "Is Abū Bakr there?" They said, "No." So he went to the Prophet ﷺ and conveyed the greeting of peace, while the complexion of the blessed face of the Prophet ﷺ began to change. So fearing the Prophet of Allāh (ﷺ) would speak against Sayyidunā 'Umar (ﷺ), Sayyidunā Abū

²⁴¹ *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Bāb Fī al-Khulafā, Ḥadīth #4033, vol.2, p. 331

²⁴² *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddithīn bi-Asbahān*, Dhikr Ibrāhīm Ibn Abī Yahyā, Ḥadīth #495, vol. 1, p. 243.

²⁴³ *Jāmi' al-Aḥādīth* (Imām al-Suyūfī), Ḥadīth #24929, vol. 13, p. 295.

²⁴⁴ *Musanaḥf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, Bāb mā Dhukira fī Abī Bakr al-Siddiq, Ḥadīth #32618, vol. 12, p. 16

²⁴⁵ *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, (Ibn Sa'd), Dhikr Wasīyyat Abī Bakr, vol.3, p. 211.

²⁴⁶ *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, vol.1, p. 319.

²⁴⁵ *Al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, Ḥadīth 5794, vol. 4, p. 224.

Bakr ﷺ knelt and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, by Allāh, I was more in the wrong," and said this twice. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allāh sent me to you all and denied²⁴⁷ whilst Abū Bakr affirmed and consoled me by himself and his property. Will you not leave for me my Companion?" and said this twice. After this, no one caused any harm to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ."²⁴⁸

My friend! Do these reasons not make it apparent to you their status and their position in the eyes of the most Beloved of Allāh ﷺ? This part is very lengthy but this would suffice a person with sound intellect.

Section C3: al-Kalām al-Bahīyy fī Tashabbuh al-Ṣiddīq bi al-Nabīyy (ﷺ)

[Magnificent Words in the Resemblance of al-Ṣiddīq with the Prophet ﷺ]

In the actions of the heart and the body, in every movement, Muslims try to imitate, emulate and follow the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ as much as possible in order to gain salvation and high ranks in both worlds. This is in relation to actions which are under a person's control [*af'al ikhtiyariyyah*]. But when Allāh's grace is upon an individual, even his involuntary actions and states [*ahwal ghayr ikhtiyariyyah*] are also made that of the Prophet's ﷺ.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ received such an honour that he had the greatest resemblance to the Prophet ﷺ. To such an extent is this resemblance that it is simply impossible to enumerate. Sayyidunā 'Alī ﷺ says, "O Abū Bakr! You resembled the Prophet ﷺ the most in the manner of walking, talking, in mercy and in grace."²⁴⁹

A few resemblances are listed below:

Resemblance 1: The opinions and inclinations of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ would match those of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. We would find that any view of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ or inclination on a matter would mirror that of the Beloved ﷺ.

²⁴⁷ Hesitated in accepting

²⁴⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Fada'il Aṣḥāb al-Nabīyy ﷺ, Hadīth #3661, p. 895.

²⁴⁹ *Al-Baḥr al-Zakh-khār*, Musnad 'Alī Ibn Abī Tālib ﷺ, Hadīth #928, vol. 3, p. 139.

At Hudaibiyyah, after being prevented entry into Makkah, the Muslims including Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ felt frustrated as they had to return back to Madinah the Illuminated. He disclosed his feelings to the Prophet of Allāh ؐ and then to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ. The words of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ were exactly the same as the words of the Prophet ؐ.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰ On behalf of the Muslims, the Messenger of Allāh ؐ signed the agreement while Suhayl bin 'Amr signed it on behalf of the disbelievers of Quraysh. Shortly afterwards, the tribe of Khuza'ah allied themselves to the Messenger of Allāh ؐ and the tribe of Banū Bakr allied themselves to the Quraysh.

Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ was amongst those who felt that it was excessive tolerance and resilience on the part of the Messenger ؐ, and the disrespect of the Qurayshi representative Suhayl.

Two points in the treaty made it distasteful to some Muslims, namely they were not given access to the Holy Sanctuary that year, and the seemingly humiliating attitude as regards reconciliation with the pagans of Quraysh.

Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ, unable to contain himself went to the Messenger of Allāh ؐ and said: "Aren't you the true Messenger of Allāh?" The Prophet ؐ replied calmly, "Why not?" Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ again spoke and asked: "Aren't we on the path of righteousness and our enemies in the wrong?"

Without showing any resentment, the Beloved Prophet ؐ replied that indeed it was so.

On getting this reply he further urged: "Then we should not suffer any humiliation in the matter of Faith." The Messenger of Allāh ؐ was unmuffled and with perfect confidence said: "I am the true Messenger of Allāh, I never disobey Him, He shall help me."

"Did you not tell us," rejoined Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ, "That we shall perform pilgrimage?" "But I have never told you," replied the Prophet ؐ, "that we shall do so this very year."

Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ was silenced. But his mind was unsettled.

He went to Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ and expressed his feelings before him. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ who had never been in doubt as regards the Holy Prophet's ؐ truthfulness and veracity confirmed what the Holy Prophet ؐ had told him and replied in exactly the same words as was the reply of the Messenger ؐ. In due course the Chapter of Victory (48th) was revealed saying: "Verily, We have given you (O Beloved - ؓ) a manifest victory." [48:1] The Messenger of Allāh ؐ summoned Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ and informed him of the glad tidings. Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ was overjoyed, and greatly regretted his former attitude. He used to spend in charity, observe fasting and prayer

Resemblance 2: The Messenger of Allāh ؐ abstained from sitting in the gathering of the disbelievers. Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ also did not like such gatherings. From the age of eighteen, he accompanied the Prophet ؐ on all journeys. Then when the Prophet of Allāh ؐ declared his Prophethood, this companionship became even stronger.

Resemblance 3: It was innate in all the Prophets ؑ to shun all types of idolatry. No Prophet ever showed the slightest of reverence or respect to any idol even during childhood. When the Prophet ؐ was born, he ؐ prostrated to Allāh, the One and Almighty, and proclaimed the Oneness of Allāh. We also see Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ even during childhood, denounce idolatry and openly remonstrate against those who believed that the idols could bring benefit or harm.

Once when he was a child, his father (Abū Quhāfah) took him to a temple and asked him to pray before the idols. His father went away to attend to some other business and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ was left alone with the idols. Addressing an idol, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ said "O Idol! I am in need of beautiful clothes, give them to me". The idol remained motionless. Then he addressed another idol saying "O Idol! I am hungry, give me some food." The idol remained silent. That exhausted the patience of the young Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ. He picked up a stone and addressing an idol said, "Here I am aiming a stone at you, if you are a god then protect yourself." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ threw

and free as many slaves as possible in expiation for the reckless attitude he had assumed.

[*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book 54, Ḥadīth #2731, #2732, *Sharḥ Usūl 'Itiqād Ahl al-Sunnah* - Vol. 1, pg. 91 #2005, *al-Tabaṣīrah* - Imām ibn al-Jawzī, the 28th Discourse, Vol. 1, pg. 362, *al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārāh* - Imām al-Maqḍīsī, Vol. 1, pg. 310 #397]

the stone at the idol and it fell onto the floor. His father came and asked, "O my son! What have you done?" He replied, "That what you see before you."

He then took him to his mother and told her about what had happened. His mother said, "Leave him alone as Allāh informed me about his state." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ asked about it. She replied, "At the time of your birth, an unseen harbinger called, "O the true maid-servant of Allāh! Glad tidings to you that a freed son will be born, whose name in the heavens is 'al-Ṣiddiq' and he will be the Companion and intimate friend of the Final Prophet (ﷺ)."

When Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ narrated this, Angel Jibrā'il ؑ came to the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and attested to the truth of this three times.²⁵¹

Resemblance 4: Allāh has made the Prophet ﷺ the paragon of mercy and affection.

The Almighty states:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢١٠﴾

And We did not send you (O Beloved Messenger - peace and blessings be upon him) except as a mercy for the entire world. [al-Anbiya - 21:107]

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلٰى خَيْرِ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ وَعَلٰى مَا عِنْدَكَ مِنْ رَّحْمَةٍ لِّلْعَالَمِيْنَ

رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢١١﴾

²⁵¹ Mirqāt al-Mafātiḥ, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Manāqib Abī Bakr ؓ, vol. 12, p. 178.

Irshād al-Sārī, Bāb Islām Abī Bakr ؓ, vol. 6, pp. 177-178.

Indeed there has come to you a Noble Messenger from among you - your falling into hardship aggrieves him, most concerned for your well being, for the Muslims most compassionate, most merciful. [al-Tawbah - 9:128]

al-Ṣiddiq al-Akbar Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ is the most merciful upon the Community of the Prophet ﷺ after him ؓ.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "The most merciful from my Community is Abū Bakr."²⁵²

In a variant narration it states, "The most affectionate from my Community (is Abū Bakr)."²⁵³

Ra'fah (affection) is greater than *rahmah* (mercy).

Resemblance 5: Allāh has made the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ the embodiment of all virtues and excellences. There is not a single virtue of the previous Prophets ؑ which the Prophet ﷺ has not been given.²⁵⁴ Similarly, He made al-Ṣiddiq al-Akbar, Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ, the embodiment of all excellences.

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "There are 360 types of virtue. When Allāh intends to do good to a person, He bestows him with one of them which takes him to Jannah." Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ asked, "O Prophet of Allāh! Do I have any of those virtues?" The

²⁵² *Jami' al-Tirmidhī*, Bāb Manāqib Mu'adh ibn Jabal wa Zayd ibn Thābit, Vol. 2, Pg. 737

²⁵³ *Musnad Abī Ya'la*, Musnad 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar, Vol. 3, Pg. 211 #5763, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* - Imām al-Bayhaqī, Bāb Tarīḥ Qawl Zayd, Vol. 6, pg. 210 #12549, *al-Matālib al-'Āliyah* (al-'Asqalānī), Bāb Mashararak fi-hī Jamā'ah, vol. 3, pg. 297 #4101

²⁵⁴ *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, (Imām al-Qasālānī), vol. 2, p. 318.

Al-Shifā (Imām al-Qādī 'Iyād), Chapter 10, pp. 79-80.

Prophet ﷺ replied, "Glad tidings O Abū Bakr! You possess all of them."²⁵⁵

Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ؓ narrated that the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Whoever gives two things in the way of Allāh will be called out from the gates of Paradise addressed, 'O slave of Allāh, here is prosperity!' So whoever from among the people used to offer their prayers will be called from the Gate of Prayer, and whoever from among the people used to participate in jihād will be called from the Gate of jihād; and whoever from among the people used to observe fasts will be called from the Gate of *al-Rayān*; and whoever was among those who used to give in charity will be called from the Gate of Charity."

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Will there be anyone who will be called from *all* these gates?" The Prophet ﷺ informed him, "Yes. And I hope you will be one of them."²⁵⁶

The scholars state that when a person does one type of worship in abundance, he will be called from the corresponding heavenly gate. However, if a person has excelled in all types of worship in such a way that preference cannot be given to one type of worship over another, he will be called from all the gates of Jannah. This is the honour such a person will be given on the Day of Judgement, though entry will only be through one.

²⁵⁵ *Makārim al-Akhlaq*, (Imām Ibn Abī Dunyā), Bāb Afḍal Akhlāq Ahl al-Dunyā wa al-Ākhīrah, p. 25.

²⁵⁶ *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Ibn 'Asākir), Man Ismuhū 'Abd-Allāh wa Yuḡāl 'Atiq, vol. 30, p. 103.

²⁵⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb al-Rayān li al-Ṣā'imīn, Ḥadīth #4037, vol. 1, p. 670.

The scholars have also stated that the 'hope' of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ ("I hope...") denotes certainty. Thus it shows that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ is an embodiment of this great virtue and excellence.

Resemblance 6: The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was bestowed with the gift of *'Jawāmī' al-kalīm*²⁵⁷ (Compendium of Speech)²⁵⁸ such that books can be written in the commentary of his speech. For example, "[The merit of] Actions are based on intentions (*Imnād'l-Ā'mālu bi'n-Niyyāt*)"²⁵⁹, "Accept Islām, you will be safeguarded (*Aslim Tuslam*)"²⁶⁰ and so forth.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ was also gifted with this by the blessing of his beloved ﷺ. Sayyidunā 'Alī ؓ says, "O Abū Bakr! Your words are the finest, your state is the most correct, you are the most silent and your words are the most eloquent."²⁶¹

Similarly, Sayyidunā 'Umar ؓ spoke about the eloquence of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ, "By Allāh, I intended only to say something that appealed to me and I was afraid that Abū Bakr would not speak so well. Then Abū Bakr spoke and his speech was very eloquent"²⁶² In another narration he says, "Abū Bakr beckoned me to keep quiet. Therefore, I remained silent. Abū Bakr had better eloquence and knowledge as

²⁵⁷ *Musnad Imām Ahmad*, Musnad Abī Hurayrah, vol.3, p. 187.

²⁵⁸ Being both concise yet comprehensive.

²⁵⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Bad' al-Waḥy, Ḥadīth #1, vol. 1, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ *Musnad al-Harith*, Ḥadīth #13, vol. 1, p. 158.

²⁶¹ *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārah*, (Imām al-Maqdisī), vol. 1, p. 398.

²⁶² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Qawl al-Nabīyy ﷺ, Ḥadīth #398, vol. 1, p. 171.

compared to me. He spontaneously spoke the same things I had thought of and articulated them even better.”²⁶³

Resemblance 7: After receiving the first revelation, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ went to the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadijah ﷺ with his heart overflowing with the first revelation.

She consoled him ﷺ saying, “It cannot be. Be cheerful. I swear by Allāh that He will never humiliate you. By Allāh, you join ties of kinship and you support the weak and feeble and you bring gain for the destitute and you are bounteous toward a guest, and you help those in genuine distress.”²⁶⁴

²⁶³ Ibid. vol. 2, p. 306.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. Hadith #3, vol. 1, p. 5.

The Imām most likely mentioned the words of Ibn al-Daghlinah when Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq ﷺ was leaving the blessed city of Makkah, “A man like Abū Bakr will not go out nor will he be turfed out. Do you expel a man who helps the poor earn their living, keeps good relations with kin, helps the weak, provides guests with food and shelter, and helps the people during their troubles...” [*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Bāb Jiwār Abī Bakr fī ‘Ahd al-Nabiyy ﷺ, Hadith #2134, vol. 2, p. 211].

It is worth noting the five things mentioned by the Mother of the Believers, Sayyidatunā Khadijah ﷺ to the Prophet ﷺ, were exactly the same words used to describe Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq ﷺ.

APPENDIX 1

Additional Resemblances²⁶⁵

Resemblance 8: His physical life in this world was 63 years, exactly the same as of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

Resemblance 9: His blessed resting place is the same blessed resting place of the Messenger ﷺ.

Resemblance 10: The apparent cause of his departure was the poisonous bite from the snake. Similarly, the apparent cause of the Beloved’s (ﷺ) departure was the poisoned meat he was given by the Jewish woman.

Resemblance 11: A person is created from the soil he is returned to²⁶⁶. Thus, the blessed soil from which Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Siddiq [and Sayyidunā ‘Umar ﷺ] were created is from the very spot from which the blessed soil of the Beloved ﷺ was taken.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Muḥammad Kalim al-Qādirī

²⁶⁶ al-Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Imān* on the authority of Sayyidunā Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī ﷺ, and in al-Musannaf of Imām ‘Abd al-Razzāq on the authority of Sayyidunā ‘Abd-Allāh ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ: “Each person is buried in the very spot from which he has been created.”

²⁶⁷ Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ relates that the origin of the blessed soil of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is from *surrat al-ard* (centre of the Earth) in Makkah al-Mukarramah and from the place where the Ka‘bah stands. Thus, the Beloved Messenger ﷺ is the *aqṣ* in *takwīn* (nucleus of creation) and the entire creation (*kā’imān*) is exists due to him ﷺ.

Imām Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī ﷺ relates in *‘Awārif al-Ma‘ārif*: “When the water was tumultuous i.e. the Flood during the time of Sayyidunā Nūḥ ﷺ, it took the blessed soil and deposited it in that very spot in which lies his blessed Mausoleum in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah.”

Resemblance 12: The day of his departure from this mundane world, Monday, was the same day of departure of the Beloved ﷺ

Resemblance 13: Upon arrival to al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, his face resembled the blessed countenance of the Beloved ﷺ. So much so, that the people of al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, who were anxiously waiting to welcome the Beloved Messenger ﷺ, were confused as to who was who.

Resemblance 14: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ was *raqiq al-qalb*. Such was also the description of the heart of the Beloved Messenger ﷺ.

Resemblance 15: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr is *al-Ṣiddiq* ﷺ – a noble characteristic that was conferred to the Beloved ﷺ, something

It has been reported on the authority of Sayyidunā Ka'b al-Ahbār ﷺ who relates: "Verily, when Allāh Almighty intended to create the most noble of all the sons of Sayyidunā Adam ﷺ – Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ, He instructed Sayyidunā Jibrā'īl ﷺ, the trustworthy angel, ordering him to bring a sufficient quantity of clay from the purest and most exalted place on earth. Sayyidunā Jibrā'īl ﷺ, descended down to earth alongside the angels of al-Firdaws and the angels of the Loftiest Realm (*al-Mala' al-A'la*). He then took a handful of clay, which was resplendent in whiteness and light, from the site of what is now the Holy Prophet's ﷺ blessed resting place, as there can be no better place on earth than this site.

This clay was taken and then mixed with the waters of the river Tasnim, from the rivers which flow in Paradise, until it became something akin to a white pearl, which emitted a resplendent light.

It was then shown to all the seven layers of the heavens and the earth, and amid showers of praise and glorification it was made known to all dwellers of Heaven and earth that this substance had found acceptance and high honour in the Divine Presence."

[*al-Anwār al-Muḥammadiyyah min al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah* – Imām Yūsuf ibn Ismā'īl al-Nabhānī – Pg. 9-10]

which even the disbelievers and pagans of Makkah by accepting him ﷺ to be as *al-Ṣādiq* and *al-Amin*.

Resemblance 16: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ was *thānī l-ithnayn* – Second of the Two.

Resemblance 17: Sūrat al-Layl was revealed for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ and Surat al-Duḥā for the Beloved ﷺ.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān al-Qādirī ﷺ writes in *al-Zulāl al-Anqā' min Bahar Sabqat al-Aṭiqā* [The Refreshing Pure Water from the Ocean of the Supremacy of al-Aṭiqā – the Most God-fearing One]:

"Imām [Fakhr al-Dīn] al-Rāzī states in his *Tafsīr – Majātib al-Ghayb*: Sūrah al-Layl, is the Sūrah of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ and Sūrah al-Duḥā is the Sūrah of the Beloved Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. There are no gaps between the two Sūrahs, so from this it can be clearly understood that there is no separation between the Beloved Messenger ﷺ and Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ. Thus, when you make mention of *wa al-Layl* (the Night) first and then *wa al-Duḥā* (the bright Mid-Morning), this denotes the transition from night to day and vice versa.

I state: Sūrah al-Layl precedes Sūrah al-Duḥā due to the fact that the former Sūrah is a rebuttal and a rejoinder to the false and baseless accusations and calumny the *kuffār* laid on Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ. Sūrah al-Duḥā is a rejoinder answering and refuting the objections and accusations of the *kuffār* against the Beloved Messenger ﷺ. It is absolutely clear that the exonerated of the Beloved ﷺ does not necessitate the disavowal of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ﷺ, whilst the exonerated of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ does by default necessitate the disavowal of the Beloved ﷺ. Thus, the wisdom by the Divine Order was to have Sūrah al-Layl preceded Sūrah al-Duḥā, so that both personalities can be exonerated of the false and baseless accusations of the *kuffār*. Had Sūrah al-Layl to come after, the defense and exonerated of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ would have been delayed.

The Sūrah of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ﷺ is al-Layl which means 'the Night', in which man gains peace, comfort, tranquility. The name of the Sūrah related to the Beloved ﷺ is Sūrah al-Duḥā, which means the 'Mid-Morning', in which one gains light and brightness and luminosity, so that it is indicative of the fact

Resemblance 18: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ was the most generous of people²⁶⁹, emulating the generosity of the Beloved ؑ who is generous more than *al-rīḥ al-mursalāh* (swift wind bringing rain).

Resemblance 19: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ is the best of the entire creation after the Prophets and Messengers, whilst the Beloved ؑ is, unconditionally, the best of the entire creation.

Resemblance 20: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ was the *Imām* of the Ṣahābah, just as the Beloved ؑ was their *Imām*.

Resemblance 21: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ was the first and foremost to testify [*taṣdīq*] to everything that the Beloved Messenger ؑ informed him, whilst the Beloved ؑ would also testify to the truthfulness of Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ.

that the Beloved ؑ is the luminosity, the light of guidance and success for Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ, whilst Sayyidunā Abū Bakr ؓ is the means of the Beloved's ؑ comfort, serenity and tranquillity and peace of mind.

Furthermore, the system of religion is established and enacted on both: just as the day and the night are indispensable for the establishment and enactment of the system of the entire universe. Without the day, one is unable to see, and without night one is unable to gain comfort and peace. [*al-Zulāʾ al-Angāʾ* - Pgs. 206-207]

²⁶⁹ Sayyidunā Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq ؓ had 40,000 dirhams, of which he spent 35,000 in the Way of Allāh prior to the Emigration. He took with him the remaining 5,000, which he then spent to purchase the piece of land upon which rests the blessed Mausoleum, the *Riyād al-Jannah* and the rest of al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharīf.

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